

THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICAL TRUST AND
SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY IN EASTERN EUROPE

Besir Ceka

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Approved by:

Milada Vachudova

Liesbet Hooghe

Robert Jenkins

Gary Marks

Graeme Robertson

John Stephens

ABSTRACT

BESIR CEKA: The Causes and Consequences of Political Trust and Satisfaction With Democracy in Eastern Europe (Under the direction of Milada Vachudova)

In my dissertation, I study the causes and consequences of political trust and satisfaction with democracy in Eastern Europe. The extent to which citizens trust key political institutions has significant ramifications for their political behavior, for electoral dynamics, and for the consolidation of democracy in a country. Three major questions about how citizens evaluate the performance of democracy and democratic institutions have shaped my research: (1) the causes of political trust; (2) the effect of media exposure on political attitudes; and (3) the political behavior of dissatisfied citizens. Thus, I investigate the main factors that explain political trust and satisfaction with democracy and then explore the consequences of such political attitudes for electoral behavior.

My findings suggest that the intensity of political competition—and the extent to which opposition parties criticize, and expose the misdeeds of the government—has a significant effect on trust in political institutions. I also find that exposure to foreign owned media, which rely on sensationalist coverage, depresses political trust and satisfaction with democracy. The opposite is the case for state-owned media because most state-owned media in Eastern Europe are controlled by the governing parties of the day and, thus, the news coverage tends to be more positive and focuses less on the

failures and more on the achievements of the government. As for the effect of political attitudes on electoral behavior, I find that citizens who do not trust key political institutions are less likely to be civically active and turn out to vote. If they do vote, however, I show that dissatisfied citizens are far more likely to vote for extreme nationalist and radical left parties than for other more moderate non-mainstream parties.

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The Perils of Political Competition: Explaining Participation and Trust in Political Parties in Eastern Europe

The democratization process in central and eastern Europe has been one of the greatest success stories of the Third Wave of democratization. Many post-communist countries, especially those that have already joined the European Union (EU), have established stable and durable democratic institutions and well-functioning market-based economies, which have significantly improved the living standards of their citizens. At the same time, recent research has shown that eastern Europeans are dissatisfied with the way democracy works in their countries, and exhibit alarming levels of distrust of the major political institutions (Rose, 2009; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, *forthcoming*). Even more intriguing are findings that show that the most highly rated postcommunist democracies have the most distrustful citizens (Pop-Eleches and Tucker, *forthcoming*; Klingemann, Fuchs, Zielonka, 2006).

What explains these findings? And what are the consequences of such high levels of distrust in political institutions for the democratic process and for political participation? The existing research identifies these puzzles, but does not provide satisfactory answers. The goal of this article is to introduce a theoretical framework that explains the high levels of distrust in one key democratic institution, political parties, and to explore its effects.

I demonstrate that in post-communist Europe vibrant political competition has come with a high price tag: it has led to disillusionment with the political system and has

stifled direct political participation by citizens. I take a bottom up approach and analyze survey data to identify the individual and country level factors that determine trust in political parties and the likelihood of political participation at the individual level. The results point in one direction: the postcommunist polities that experienced vibrant political competition in their electoral arenas also witnessed the highest levels of disillusionment with political parties and, consequently, with the political system. This, I argue, is mainly due to the communist legacy of the one-party system and the opportunities for rent-seeking unleashed by the closing down of centrally planned economies. Decades of monopolization of the electoral arena by communist parties left East Europeans ill prepared to appreciate vigorous political competition—especially as it exposed a parade of economic and other scandals. Depending on its intensity and the vigor with which parties exposed corrupt dealings, competition tended to depress trust in political parties as an institution and, consequently, stifled direct political participation.

The causal story I tell involves several steps. The basic argument runs as follows: Intense political competition and, in particular, vocal and critical opposition parties that criticize and expose government scandals do much to convince the average Eastern European that political parties are deeply corrupt institutions run by self-interested and power-hungry politicians. Mishandlings of the privatization process provide much of the ammunition for the opposition which, when coupled with a political culture of distrust and apathy, tends to further erode trust in political parties. This distrust, I argue, has had the overall effect of depressing direct political participation as disillusioned citizens have tended to withdraw from public life. However, some of the disillusioned have been an

electoral boon for some new and unorthodox parties that have been able to mobilize them (Pop-Eleches, 2010).

I also demonstrate that there is an interaction effect between partisanship and competition in explaining trust in parties. More specifically, competition has the effect of reducing trust in parties only for those individuals who have weak or no party identification. For intense partisans, vigorous political competition has no effect on their trust of political parties as an institution.

While the main empirical section of this paper primarily uses cross-sectional data from a particular wave of surveys conducted in Eastern Europe between 1997 and 2001, my theoretical framework has dynamic implications as well. My theory suggests that as time passes and as individuals are able to form party attachments, the effect of competition on trust in parties should fade away. Furthermore, as the economic transition draws to a close and as new generations of East Europeans are socialized into democratic norms and rules, the communist legacies should matter less. Thus, the relationship between competition and trust should be further weakened. Therefore, in the final section of this article, I investigate trends over time and offer some preliminary evidence in support of the dynamic predictions of my theory.

The rest is organized in five sections. First, I discuss the relevant strands of literature that deal with political competition, participation, and trust. Second, I discuss the measures I use for the main variables of interest. Third, I describe the methods used and discuss the findings. Fourth, I trace trends in political trust and party identification over time. The final section concludes with the implications of my findings.

1. Political competition, trust and participation

The quality of political competition assumes a central position in our understanding of democracy. The competitiveness of the electoral arena has become the predominant yardstick against which scholars of transitology have classified and evaluated the democratic progress of regimes in transition (Diamond, 2002). This section discusses the literature that has grappled with different conceptions and measures of political competition and why it is important.

First, many scholars have examined the role of political competition in deepening democracy in fledgling democracies by focusing on alternation of power and the strength of the opposition (Vachudova, 2005; Wright, 2008). For these scholars, the alternation of power between ruling parties and the opposition is a strong indicator of a competitive electoral arena. Others have used the ideological distance (i.e. ideological polarization) between the major ruling and opposition parties to measure competition (Frye, 2002). The logic for using this measure is that ideologically distant parties are more likely to serve as greater checks on their opponents than are parties with closer ideological orientations. Thus, polarization provides the checks and balances that produce political accountability. Some scholars have criticized this and other measures as static (Grzymala-Busse, 2006). For example Grzymala-Busse (2006) argues that our measures need to capture the robustness of political competition by focusing on the dynamic interaction between parties.

My conceptualization of political competition is in line with Grzymala-Busse (2006). Given that one of the main roles of opposition parties is to act as “watchdogs” and hold the opposition accountable, measures of competition need to reflect the activity

and behavior of parties. I am primarily interested in analyzing the effect of vocal, and critical political competition on trust and participation. As such, my operationalization of competition, which I discuss later, taps into the robustness of political competition.

Why do we care about political competition? What evidence do we have that more competition does in fact lead to better democratic outcomes? Some of the early work on this topic suggests that there is a strong link between political competition and public policy (Schattschneider, 1942; Key, 1949). Specifically, this literature argues that higher political competition leads politicians and parties to distribute public goods more. More recent work has established that the sooner a country establishes a competitive political arena the quicker it sheds its authoritarian past (Vachudova, 2005; Grzymala-Busse, 2006; Wright, 2008; O'Dwyer, 2004). Vachudova (2005) argues that political competition is crucial in explaining the different trajectories that countries followed after the fall of communism. The countries that had strong opposition movements prior to 1989 had better chances of electing liberal leaders during the first democratic elections and of institutionalizing a competitive political system. For Vachudova, the main virtue of political competition is that it limits rent-seeking by exposing politicians to greater scrutiny (Vachudova, 2005). Others, most notably Wright (2008), have looked into the effect of political competition on regime stability. Using pooled data for over ninety countries, Wright shows that democracies with low levels of initial competition tend to fail because they face anti-system forces, which seek to ascend to power through extrajudicial means.

This may all be true, but scholars have neglected to investigate the impact that competition has on citizens' trust and political participation. I show below that it

depresses both. Many authors have explored the importance of trust in democratic institutions for democratic consolidation (e.g. Schmitter, 1994). One observation that has been validated by comparative research is that trust in political institutions, especially trust in political parties, is significantly lower in Eastern Europe compared to both Western Europe and other new democracies of the Third Wave (Catterberg and Moreno, 2005; Rose, 2009).

What does the literature have to say about the determinants of support for democracy and its institutions? Herbert Kitschelt (1992), for example, makes a forceful case for the connection between market success and mass support for democracy in Eastern and Central Europe. However, the prediction that economic performance will largely determine support for democracy and its institutions has been only partially validated. For example, Evans and Whitefield (1995) find that political factors are more important in explaining commitment to democracy than economic performance. In fact, when they look at the link between GDP per capita levels and support for democracy, they find that the poorest three countries exhibit the most support for democracy, the opposite of what Kitschelt (1992) predicted. This is consistent with my theoretical model. Generally speaking, poorer countries in post-communist Europe lacked vibrant party competition and the citizens of these countries were less likely to become disillusioned with political institutions as a result of competition.

Political participation has likewise been extensively studied. While there is much dispute about global trends in participation, there is one striking regularity that emerges in virtually every study that compares postcommunist Europe to the rest of the world: Eastern Europeans are less likely to participate in the public sphere, however

participation is operationalized (Rose, 2006, 2009; Howard, 2003; Inglehart and Catterberg 2002). Furthermore, there is rich variation in the levels of participation across the postcommunist world. Why are the Poles, the Estonians, and the Slovenians some of the most skeptical and disengaged democrats in Europe while their countries are considered to be the region's democratic and economic frontrunners? This paper is about answering this puzzle and, in the following section, I sketch my theoretical framework and offer a causal story that links political competition to direct political participation.

2. Theories and Hypothesis

The main theoretical argument of this paper is that vibrant political competition has had the effect of eroding public trust in postcommunist democratic institutions, particularly in political parties—and this has negatively affected political participation. This, I argue, is caused primarily by two factors that are unique to post-communism: the communist legacy of distrust and the economic transition. Decades of communist party hegemony had left Eastern Europeans deeply distrustful of political parties and ill-prepared to appreciate vigorous political competition. Depending on its intensity, competition has tended to depress trust in political parties as an institution and, consequently, stifle political participation.

There are three causal stories in this argument. First, I argue that competition tends to depress trust in parties. Second, I argue that this is the case only for those individuals who have weak or no party identification. Competition does not affect the level of trust that strong partisans have in political parties. In other words, political competition interacts with partisanship. Third, lack of trust in political parties stifles direct political participation as disillusioned citizens tend to withdraw from public life. I

now turn to each building block of this theoretical model and give a more detailed account of the causal mechanisms at play.

2.1 The effect of competition on trust

First, how does competition depress trust in political parties as an institution? The mechanism that causally links these two variables is a psychological one. Fierce electoral competition and, in particular, vocal and critical opposition parties that expose government misdoings do much to convince the average Eastern European that political parties are fundamentally corrupt institutions. As Levi and Stoker (2000) have pointed out, one trusts politicians and political institutions to the extent that there is no evidence to the contrary. Consequently, the more vigilant and scrutinizing the political parties are of one another the more one hears about corruption, incompetence, and failure. In short, the logic of political survival and competition leads political parties and individual politicians to exaggerate the failures of their opponents and this creates an impression of severe social, economic, and political disorder for the average citizen.

The economic transformation that occurred in postcommunist Europe played a crucial role in galvanizing pre-existing cynicism towards the political. The transition from command economies to market based ones that started right after the fall of communism created spectacular opportunities for rent-seeking behavior and state capture (Hellman, 1998; Ganev, 2007). During this rent-seeking bonanza, politicians could divvy up public property among friends and cronies, dole out construction contracts to companies they partly owned, and engage in myriad other forms of corruption. This, in many cases, led to sensational and widely publicized corruption scandals.

Before we discuss specific cases of corruption and show how they lowered trust in political institutions, it is important to note that, at least theoretically, the extent to which ruling elites were involved in corrupt practices is not necessarily reflected in the number of scandals that were exposed and publicized. In fact, in countries such as Poland, Estonia, and Slovenia ruling elites were far less abusive of state resources precisely because of the fierce political opposition they faced (Grzymala-Busse 2007). This has been indicated consistently by third party corruption measures, such as the Transparency International Corruption index. However, survey data from the 1990s and 2000s shows that the citizens of these three countries have been consistently the most distrustful of political parties, with over 90 percent of the respondents indicating that they have very little or no trust in them (Rose, 2009).

There is little doubt that the extent to which elites have engaged in corrupt practices has varied. What matters, and this is the crux of my argument, is that the scandalization of corruption cases was most pronounced in those countries where vigilant and critical opposition parties were able to expose government abuse. As Grzymala-Busse (2006: 283) suggests, “a critical opposition constantly monitors and publicizes the misdeeds of the government, criticizing its actions in parliament, questioning its motivations, and turning also to media channels to voice criticism.”

The paradoxical case of Slovenia is particularly instructive: it is widely considered one of the least corrupt in the region, yet it is home to some of its most distrustful citizens. The authors of a report on corruption and anti-corruption policy in Slovenia by the Open Society Institute (2002) conclude that despite “statistics on criminal proceedings and the opinions of analysts and international organisations including the

European Union [indicating] that corruption is not a serious problem in Slovenia... citizens' perceptions are that corruption is both widespread and increasing." When asked in 1997, only 1.2 percent of the Slovenian respondents reported that they had personally been victims of corruption¹. Yet, in a survey conducted in 1999 by the Slovenian Institute of Social Sciences, over 62 percent of the respondents believed that corruption in Slovenia is on the rise and 38 percent believed that 'almost all or the majority of public officials' were involved in some form of corruption (OSI, 2002: 578). This clearly suggests that the alarmingly high levels of perceived corruption, and the consequent low levels of trust in political institutions, are not borne out of personal experience with corruption or based on objective third party measures of corruption.

Why do Slovenian citizens have so little trust in public officials? Slovenian political expert Drago Zajc explains that Slovenians had unrealistically high hopes for democracy after the fall of communism. What they got from pluralistic politics was inter-party quarrelling and criticism, and a constant questioning of the intentions, legitimacy and truthfulness of politicians². Slovenian civil society activist Dejan Savic concurred, adding that average citizens have come to distrust the government and the political parties that run it because the heavy criticism levied against them has convinced many "that it must be true that politicians and their parties are either incompetent or corrupt."³

¹ This data is reported in the OSI (2002) report and is taken from the International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS), which is an international comparative crime survey dealing with 11 types of crimes.

² Personal communication in Ljubljana, Slovenia on September 8, 2011.

³ Personal communication in Ljubljana, Slovenia on September 7, 2011.

To be fair, Slovenia and its political establishment have been rocked by a number of corruption scandals over the years.⁴ However, corruption and state-capture was, by all accounts, far more endemic in Bulgaria, for example; yet Bulgarians exhibit the highest levels of trust in parties in the survey data analyzed here. My theory explains these puzzling findings in terms of substantial information failures on the part of the citizens and their inability to compare the relative democratic and economic progress of their countries. Despite more widespread corruption in Bulgaria, the lack of powerful opposition forces with resources and political skill to expose and scandalize corruption cases has resulted in Bulgarians being more trusting of political parties than Slovenes!

In fact, if one considers the Corruption Perception Index by Transparency International to be a reasonable measure of the actual levels of corruption in a country, bivariate correlation analysis shows that there is no relationship between trust in parties and actual levels of corruption (Pearson's correlation coefficient is -0.08)⁵. However, the correlation coefficients between Trust in Parties and the two measures of political competition I use below are relatively high. Specifically, the Effective Number of Parties and Trust in parties are highly correlated at 0.61. Similarly, Closeness of Elections is correlated to trust in parties with a coefficient of 0.46 (higher values of Closeness indicate less competitive elections).

But why would citizens be disappointed with political parties, rather than with the individual actors involved in corruption, ranging from party officials to would-be oligarchs to well-connected nomenklatura beneficiaries? The answer is that political

⁴ See the OSI (2002) report for a discussion of a number of corruption scandals.

⁵ Higher scores of the CPI indicate less corruption.

parties are the institutions through which politicians run for office, implement policies once in office and, in many cases, individual politicians see parties as vehicles for their self-enrichment. Furthermore, voters vote for parties during elections and not for individual politicians. Thus, politicians do not operate independently of their parties; their actions, including corruption, reflect upon the parties that allow them to exercise power. As Enyedi and Toka (2007: 8) have argued, “The initial reservation against parties can be explained in terms of the communist legacy, but the various scandals surrounding party politics have certainly strengthened negative stereotypes concerning the actual motives of party politicians.” Numerous privatization-related scandals “generated much cynicism about the moral integrity of ...political parties in general (Enyedi and Toka, 2007: 9).”

Why does the communist legacy of one-party rule play such an important role in determining how post-communist citizens regard parties? My main claim here is that nowhere else were political parties as hated and political involvement as tainted. Unlike parties in other authoritarian regimes, the communist parties of Eastern Europe managed to transform the institution of the political party into an anathema for millions of Eastern Europeans. For decades, many saw the Communist party as an incompetent, and corrupt institution that served the interests of the nomenklatura. Political persecutions, dismal living standards, and empty propaganda left many questioning the moral integrity of the Communist parties in the region.

The Communist party-states gave rise to what Vaclav Havel has called the “politics of anti-politics (Rose, 2009) and led György Konrád, the famous Hungarian novelist and dissident, to claim that, “We ought to depoliticize our lives, free them from

politics as from some contagious infection. We ought to free our simple everyday affairs from considerations of politics...So I describe the democratic opposition as not a political but antipolitical opposition, since its essential activity is to work for destatification (Stokes, 1996: 180).⁶” Thus, given these deep-seated anti-party sentiments, some parties that ran in the first few elections avoided calling themselves parties. As the Czech Civic Forum famously put it during the 1990 elections “Parties are for party members, Civic Forum is for everybody” (Kopecky 2001).

2.2 Party identification as a conditioning factor

However, not all Eastern Europeans hate or distrust political parties as an institution. In fact, I argue that the effect of competition on trust in parties depends on how closely an individual identifies with a party, and this is the second causal claim of my theoretical framework. How does partisanship mitigate the link between competition and trust? The key here is that the partisan brain is a biased brain. Whenever an individual with strong emotional attachments to a party is confronted with contradictory evidence suggesting that, say, his party is involved in corrupt dealings, he is unlikely to be impartial in evaluating such claims. Thus, he will be less likely to lose trust in his own party and consequently in political parties as an institution. The effect of such allegations is different for someone who has no emotional stake in any of the parties involved in the supposed corrupt dealings. Such an individual is more likely to be objective about the facts presented and thus more likely to reinforce her negative prejudices against parties (Westen, 2007).

⁶ This is an excerpt from Konrad’s essay titled “Antipolitics” that he wrote in 1984 and which has been reprinted in Stokes “From Stalinsim to pluralism: a docmunetary history of Eastern Europe since 1945.”

2.3 The consequences of political trust for participation

Third, I argue that distrust in political parties is directly linked to lower political participation. If one is convinced that parties are corrupt institutions that serve the interests of party leaders at the expense of the public, he will be less likely to turn out and vote or work for a party. In other words, if political parties are not seen as aggregators of societal interests, as our theories usually assume, and are instead considered to be in the business of rent-seeking and state capture, political participation will be lower.

Distrust, however, can also spur people to mobilize for other parties⁷. The extent to which disillusioned voters can be mobilized to vote instead of withdrawing completely from the political process is an empirical question. Theoretically, some disillusioned voters will shop around instead of simply resigning from politics. In fact, there is evidence to suggest that disillusioned voters in Eastern Europe switch from one party to another and, when they run out of mainstream parties, they vote for unorthodox parties (Pop-Eleches, 2010). The regression results presented later in this paper are in line with this finding. On average, distrustful voters are less likely to vote than those who trust parties, but some of them present an electoral opportunity for different parties.

Controlling for relevant factors, however, these distrustful voters are very unlikely to go to work for a party.

Having laid out my theoretical framework, I now proceed to discuss the measures I use for my key dependent and independent variables⁸.

3. Measuring Political Competition, Participation, and Partisanship

⁷ I thank an anonymous reviewer for this insight.

⁸ A detailed description of all the variables used in this article is available upon request.

As discussed above, we find many different operationalizations of political competition in the literature. For the regression analyses here, I use two measures of political competition: the effective number of parties (ENP) and the Closeness of Elections. The effective number of parties (ENP) that manage to win seats in parliament serves as a proxy for party behavior (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979).⁹ Laakso and Taagepera introduced this measure to count parties that win seats in elections and to weigh them by their relative legislative strength. The mathematical formula used to calculate the ENP is the following:

$$N = \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2}$$

Where n is number of all parties competing in the electoral contest, and p_i^2 the square of each party's proportion of all the seats in the parliament. This measure systematically distinguishes important parties from smaller and less significant ones. Given that the proportion of the seats that each party wins is squared in the measure, bigger parties count more than smaller parties. This measure of political competition is particularly suitable because it directly taps into the intensity of competition and the activity of parties by measuring both the number and strength of parties in parliament. So, higher ENP scores would indicate that the electoral system is more competitive and that several significant opposition parties have won seats in the parliament, thus increasing the heat and scrutiny that the ruling party or parties receive from the opposition.¹⁰ In using this

⁹ The actual calculations were done by Michael Gallagher and are available on his website at: http://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/Staff/michael_gallagher/ElSystems/Docts/ElectionIndices.pdf.

¹⁰ Since turnout in the last parliamentary elections is one of the main variables I am trying to explain, I used the ENP measure for the elections that the respondents were asked about. The election years for which the

measure I implicitly assume that the presence of a larger number of strong parties in parliament gives greater opportunities to opposition parties to be vocal and critical of the government by asking questions in parliament, and bringing media attention to corruption scandals and economic failures. Based on this measure, Bulgaria is the least competitive country in the sample, with a score of 2.52, while Slovenia is the most competitive one with an ENP score of 5.53.

However, the ENP measure has its limitations. It cannot capture intense competition in systems that, due to the electoral rules, are dominated by two parties (e.g. the Westminster system). Here two powerful parties can be very effective critics of one another. Fortunately, none of the cases included in the regression analyses has a purely majoritarian electoral system, limiting the bias that the ENP measure introduces in my analysis.

Nonetheless, as a robustness check, I constructed an additional measure of political competition, the *Closeness of Elections*, to test my main hypotheses. I use the Comparative Data Set for 28 Post-Communist Countries, 1989–2004, by Armingeon and Careja (2007) to calculate the difference in the share of votes received by the two largest parties in an election. The logic is that closer elections should be more contentious and harder fought than elections won in a landslide. The regressions results using *Closeness* as the main independent variable yield similar results, and provide support for my main hypotheses that competition decreases political trust.

ENP measure was constructed were: Bulgaria: 1997; Czech Republic: 1998; Estonia: 1999; Hungary: 1995; Latvia: 1995; Lithuania: 2000; Poland: 1997; Romania: 1996; Slovakia: 1998; Slovenia: 1996.

Due to space limitations, the results using this additional measure are available upon request.

Scholars have used numerous indicators of political participation ranging from the most conventional, such as voting, to more unconventional ones such as signing petitions, protesting, or boycotting (Rose, 2006). In this paper, I use survey¹¹ questions that ask people whether (1) they have voted in the last parliamentary elections, and (2) how frequently they work for political parties. These two measures are appropriate because they measure both the most frequent form of participation (voting) and a more sustained and long-term form of participation that taps into the grassroots support of parties (working for a party). Although participating in the latter activity probably increases in the run up to elections, the time that people spend working for parties is an indicator of more sustained political activism that goes beyond voting on Election Day. Finally, for party identification I use a measure that taps into the intensity of party ID with the options being no party ID, not very close, fairly close, and very close to a party.

3.1 Controls for trust in parties

In the next two subsections, I discuss some alternative explanations that scholars have found to determine trust and participation. The relevant hypotheses are included as controls in the regression analyses.

Many have argued that interpersonal trust is an indicator of human capital, which is positively related to trust in political institutions. As Catterberg and Moreno have found, (2005: 44) “Individuals who generally trust in other people express higher

¹¹ Consolidation of Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe 1990-2001. Cumulative Data from a fifteen country study in 1997-2001 and the 1990-92 Post-Communist Publics Study in eleven countries coordinated by Edeltraud Roller, Dieter Fuchs, Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Bernhard Wessels (Social Science Research Center Berlin, WZB), and János Simon (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest).

confidence in political institutions.” Some individuals might be more or less skeptical by nature, and their trust for other people (e.g. neighbors and coworkers) should predict trust in political institutions as well. Thus, I include two controls for interpersonal trust: trust in neighbors and trust in coworkers. Furthermore, if one believes that parties only serve the interests of their leaders then one is less likely to trust in parties. I control for this by including a variable that asked respondents whether they agreed with the statement that “parties only serve their leaders’ interests.”

As I discussed earlier, some have argued that support for democratic institutions in Eastern Europe will depend on economic experience during the transition period (Kitschelt, 1992; Przeworski, 1991). To control for this, I include a variable that measures how well-off individual respondents are. Furthermore, satisfaction with democracy as a system should be related to trust in its institutions as well as political participation. I therefore include a variable that measures on a scale from 1 (totally dissatisfied) to 10 (totally satisfied) the extent to which the respondent is happy with the way democracy works in the country. Trust in parties might also depend on how exposed one is to media. Given that corruption allegations and other negative information that tends to erode trust in parties comes from the media, people that spend more time reading newspapers should be more distrustful of parties than people who do not read as much. I also control for a set of socio-economic and demographic variables such as income, gender, sex, and size of community.

As far as country level variables are concerned, I include Freedom House (Nations in Transit) democracy scores to control for democratic consolidation and internalization of democratic values. I also include Freedom of Press scores and

Independence of Media ratings to control for the role that professional and independent media play in uncovering and exposing corruption cases. Again, a freer and more independent media should be associated with lower levels of trust in parties. Furthermore, I include a measure of income inequality, the Gini coefficient, from Solt's (2009) dataset. The expectation here is that citizens living in societies with greater inequality should have lower levels of trust in political institutions (Anderson and Singer, 2008). To control for political culture (i.e. religious traditions), I include a dummy variable (Catholic) that takes the value of 1 if 50 percent or more of the population identify themselves as Catholic. To code this variable, I used data from the CIA's World Factbook. Finally, the existing literature has found that highly proportional electoral systems are characterized with higher levels of political trust than systems that are mixed (Marien, 2012). Thus, I include a dummy variable for electoral rules based on Armingeon and Careja's (2007) dataset on political institutions. This variable takes a value of 1 if a country has a pure or modified PR system and it takes a value of 0 if parliamentary seats are allocated using a mix of PR and majoritarian rules. Only Hungary and Lithuania fall in the latter category.

3.2 Controls for Political Participation

Almost two centuries ago, Alexis de Tocqueville (2000 [1835]) claimed that civic engagement in voluntary organizations leads to direct political participation. Tocqueville's theory postulates that as members of civic organizations have face-to-face contact with other members they learn to care more about the wider world and develop certain civic skills, which induces political efficacy. Putnam (1993, 2000) and others have espoused this view of civic associations as "schools of democracy" and have found Tocqueville's theory to be supported by evidence. I operationalize social capital as the

total number of organizational memberships per person. Furthermore, interest in politics should be positively associated with participation. I control for this factor by including a variable that asks respondents about how often they discuss politics with others.

Furthermore, Inglehart (1997) has found that individuals that hold post-materialist values such as self-expression and gender equality as opposed to materialist values of economic and physical security are more likely to be civic minded and politically active. I run confirmatory factor analysis¹² on several questions that tap into post-materialist values, and use the predicted scores to construct a Post-Materialist Index. Many previous studies have shown that more educated individuals that have higher incomes and live in smaller territorial units are more likely to participate. I include control variables for all these factors. In addition, age is found to be positively related to participation as older people have more time on their hands to participate. Others have found gender to be important in predicting both political and nonpolitical participation, with men being more likely to participate than women (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995).

Having introduced the theoretical argument and empirical expectations, along with several alternative hypotheses identified by the existing literature, I now turn to statistical analysis in order to better understand the link between political competition and political participation in Eastern Europe.

Before I discuss the results, I need to say a few words about the statistical methods I employ in my analysis. I use hierarchical logistic models with random effects¹³

¹² Only one factor emerges with an eigenvalue greater than 1 (1.03647 in our case), indicating that the predicted factor taps into one dimension only—post-materialism.

¹³ Here I follow Gelman and Hill's (2007) recommendation to use random effects for multilevel modeling.

that utilize both individual level data (e.g. sex or age) and aggregate data (e.g. country measures for political competition). Single level models such as multivariate linear and logistic regression are valuable methods for establishing causal relationships and are widely used in our field. However, many populations of interest in political science have a multi-level structure. For example, when analyzing survey data such as ours, we might be interested in both individual factors and country level factors that explain a certain outcome (Gelman and Hill, 2007). If we choose a single-level analysis, we are not utilizing all the information we have in estimating our models. It is important to note that my dataset has a total of 10 groups, in our case countries, for which I estimate second level effects. While this might seem like a low number of groups, Gelman and Hill (2007), for instance, have argued, that “even with only one or two groups in the data... multilevel models can be useful for making predictions (p. 276).”

I use survey data for my regression analysis. The “Consolidation of Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe 1990-2001” comprises an excellent set of surveys that provides a wealth of information about Eastern European attitudes towards democracy and participation. Due to better data availability, I use surveys from the second Wave (1997-2001) of this study.¹⁴ These surveys are suitable for conducting comparative analyses because the questions asked are theoretically motivated and nuanced enough to allow for more sophisticated tests.

¹⁴ Here are the countries and the dates of the surveys: Bulgaria: 1999; Czech Republic: February 2001; Estonia: November to December 2001; Hungary: May 1999; Latvia: September 1998; Lithuania: September 2001; Poland: March 2000; Romania: March to May 1998; Slovakia: February 2001; Slovenia: May to September 1999. With the exception of the ENP measure, each of the country-level indicators corresponds to the year in which the survey was conducted in a particular country. The election years for which the ENP measure was constructed were: Bulgaria: 1997; Czech Republic: 1998; Estonia: 1999; Hungary: 1995; Latvia: 1995; Lithuania: 2000; Poland: 1997; Romania: 1996; Slovakia: 1998; Slovenia: 1996.

4.1 How does political competition affect trust in parties?

The main theoretical claim of this paper is that competition depresses trust in parties. But this effect is conditional on the intensity of party identification. Therefore, I now turn to regression analysis and test whether there is an interaction effect between competition and party identification in determining trust in political parties¹⁵. To test for this interaction effect I construct four dummy variables using information from the *Party ID* variable. Each variable corresponds to the intensity of partisanship that ranges from no party identification to very close identification, with the base being no party identification. I then interact each of these dummy variables with the measure for competition. Below is the table with the regression results.

The results strongly support the hypothesis that the effect of competition on trust in political parties depends on the intensity of party identification. As hypothesized, this effect is observed only for those who identify very closely with a political party. As we can see from the coefficients of *Comp*Not very close* and *Comp*Fairly close*, the effect that competition has on trust for parties for people with weak or fairly weak party identification is statistically indistinguishable from the same effect for those in the base category with no party identification. In other words, given the highly significant coefficient of the *Competition* variable, political competition tends to depress trust in parties equally for all individuals who either identify weakly with parties or do not identify with them at all.

¹⁵ The dependent variable in this regression is dichotomous measure of trust in parties, which was coded as 1 if people indicated that they trust parties either totally or to a certain point, and was coded 0 if people said that they had little or no trust at all in parties.

However competition does not affect the extent to which those who identify very closely with a party trust parties. The slope representing the effect of competition on trust for strong partisans is statistically indistinguishable from zero. This interaction effect becomes even clearer if one looks at the graphs in Figure 1.1 below

These graphs plot the predicted marginal probabilities of trust in parties for the whole range of the ENP index for people with different levels of party identification. Figure 1.1 is striking in that, in the lowest right graph, the solid line that corresponds to those who identify very closely to parties is flat, suggesting that political competition has no effect on the probability of trust in political parties for intense partisans. As predicted, logistic curves for all other categories are downward sloping indicating that as competition increases, the probability of trusting parties goes down. In substantive terms, controlling for the effect of all other variables in the regression, a one unit increase in the ENP index is associated with an approximately 10.5 percent decrease in the probability of trusting parties for all but the very intense partisans. In sum, there is strong evidence suggesting that intense partisans are immune to the negative effects of competition on trust in parties. For those who do not identify very closely with a party, however, competition tends to depress trust in this political institution. In all four graphs, the dotted flat line represents the average percent of people who claim to trust parties, and the dashed lines around the curves represent 95% Confidence Intervals.

It is important to note that the weak partisans are by far the biggest group. In fact, over 60 percent of the respondents in the second wave of surveys suggested that they have no party affiliation. Strong partisans, for whom intense competition does not depress trust in parties, make up only 5.65 percent of the respondents. Furthermore, around 25

percent indicated that they are not very close to any party, and 9 percent said that they were fairly close to a party.

The regression output suggests some other interesting findings. Contrary to what I hypothesized, more exposure to media, measured by how often one reads about politics in newspapers (*Newspaper*), is associated with more trust in political parties. There might be some selection bias in this variable as disillusioned citizens might be less likely to read about politics than, say, political partisans. However, the *Freedom of press* variable is negatively related to trust, confirming that a more independent media with greater capacity to expose scandals does depress political trust. As hypothesized, higher satisfaction with democracy is positively related with higher trust in parties, as indicated by the coefficient of *Dem. Satisfaction*. This result suggests that the more one is satisfied with the general functioning of democracy, the more likely she is to trust its core institutions.

Furthermore, the highly significant coefficients on the two variables measuring inter-personal trust suggest that people who are more trusting of coworkers and neighbors are also more trusting of parties. Therefore, the evidence indicates that there might be some individual characteristics that make some people generally less trusting than others. As far as demographic variables are concerned, I am surprised to find that age is positively and statistically significantly related to trust in parties: one might have assumed that the more time an individual spent living during communism, the less he would trust parties. One creative interpretation of this result might be that, given that older voters are more likely to show up and vote on Election Day, they are also more likely to form attachments to parties, which tends to increase trust in parties.

Unsurprisingly, the belief that parties serve only the interests of their leaders, measured by the *Self-interested* variable, lowers the probability of trust in parties and this variable is highly significant and has the largest substantive effect on the dependent variable.

Regarding country-level variables, besides *Competition* and *Freedom of press*, income inequality is also related to trust in parties, but contrary to what one would expect: countries with more unequal distribution of income have higher levels of trust in parties. However, this result becomes less puzzling if one considers Hellman's (1998:234) finding that "post-communist systems with a higher level of political participation and competition have been able to adopt and maintain more comprehensive economic reforms" and have experienced the slowest growth in income inequality. In contrast, in partial and slow reforming countries a small number of people – unhampered by strong political competition – have amassed fabulous fortunes at the expense of the society; these countries have also experienced the highest increase in inequality. These are the same countries whose citizens, as my analysis has shown, have exhibited greater levels of political trust than the citizens of countries with more competition. Thus, the positive relationship between income inequality and trust is consistent with the existing literature that emphasizes the exceptional nature of post-communist transition and politics.

4.2 How does trust in parties affect direct political participation?

So far, my empirical analysis has shown that increased competition tends to depress trust in parties only for those who are not intense partisans. I now proceed to show the final causal relationship between trust in parties and direct political participation

to complete the testing of the entire theoretical framework. Table 1.2 reveals some interesting results.

The most significant pattern that can be inferred from this table is that trust in parties is positively related to both forms of direct political participation. Although the effect that trust in parties has on voting is substantially lower than the effect it has on working for a party, both coefficients are significant at the 0.05 level. We are pretty confident that the more a person trusts parties, the more likely they are to vote or work for parties. For example, trusting parties somewhat as opposed to little corresponds to a 13 percent increase in the probability of working for a party and to an approximately 3 percent increase in the probability of voting. The fact that lower levels of trust in parties have a substantially smaller effect on voting is most likely due to the fact that some disillusioned voters can still be persuaded to vote. Further research is needed to establish this link more convincingly.

Unsurprisingly, interest in politics is positively related to participation. People who talk more about politics are more likely both to vote and to work for a party. Membership in civil society organizations is positively related to both voting and working for parties, but its coefficient is only significant for *work for parties*. Putnam's claim that civil society organizations act as "schools of democracy" is at least partially supported by the regression results. Interestingly, post-materialists are more likely to vote but less likely to work for parties. The coefficient of the *Post-Materialism* variable is significant in both regressions. One interpretation of this contradictory finding is that, given that post-materialism is associated with challenging authority, people that hold

post-materialist values are less likely to work for parties because they tend to be hierarchically structured.

As we expected, party identification is positively related to voting and working for a party. *Democratic satisfaction* is positively related to voting only. From the socio-economic variables only income is consistently and positively related to participation. Wealthier people are both more likely to show up at voting booths and get involved in more sustained political activity by working for parties. Older people are more likely to vote but age does not seem to affect one's likelihood of working for parties. Also, people living in smaller communities are more likely to vote and work for parties than those living in bigger communities. One interpretation of this finding is that trust networks and civil society organization are denser and more personalized in smaller communities, leading to higher rates of participation (Putnam, 1993).

Trends over time

The surveys I have analyzed so far were conducted a decade ago. What has happened in Eastern Europe since then? I do not have space to marshal definitive evidence, but important indicators point to an increase in trust in political parties. For example, evidence from the European Social Surveys (ESS) suggests that, by 2008, levels of trust in countries such as Slovenia, Slovakia and Estonia had become as high as or higher than in Western Europe. Hungary is the exception to this trend (see Figure 1.2).

Interestingly, survey data (ESS 2004 and ESS 2008) on party identification from a select number of Eastern European countries also seems to suggest that Hungary is the only country where there has been a drop between 2000 and 2008 in the percentage of

respondents who claim to feel very close or fairly close to a political party.¹⁶ There is little doubt that these trends can be explained by a 2006 political scandal that rocked Hungary, revealing that Prime Minister Gyurcsány had admitted in a speech that he and his party had been lying to the public for years in order to remain in power.

To return to the broader picture, it seems that, as my theory would predict, an increase in party identification has been accompanied by an increase in trust in parties in Eastern Europe. Among the EU's postcommunist members included in my analysis, political competition has certainly not gone down either. This preliminary evidence suggests that the negative effect of competition on trust in parties may be fading away. There are several possible explanations. First, 20 years have passed and, as new generations of Eastern Europeans are socialized into democratic norms and rules, the communist legacy of distrust in parties may be losing its salience. Second, the economic transition has worked itself out and the privatization process is drawing to a close, providing fewer opportunities for spectacular self-enrichment on the part of party leaders and limiting the number of scandals. More research is needed to explore the link between political competition and democratic support in a more dynamic fashion.

Conclusion

In this article I have shown that in post-communist Europe, at least for the first ten years, the effects of political competition have been to depress direct political participation by the citizens. What are the implications of this argument? First and foremost, it offers a more complete understanding of the factors driving disillusionment

¹⁶ More specifically, there was a 10 percent drop in the number of respondents who indicated that they feel very close or fairly close to a party.

with political life in postcommunist Europe. It also offers a systematic way of thinking through puzzling findings that show low levels of support for democracy and its institutions in the very countries that have been the democratic and institutional front-runners of the transition. Where does this leave us? Do we need to rethink our theories of political competition? I would say not. There is little doubt that competition has been tremendously beneficial for postcommunist societies: it has constrained rent-seeking by government officials; it has prompted better governance; and it has improved economic performance. My hope is that this article helps explain the political apathy of certain East European citizens that so many comparative politics scholars and other informed observers have noted and found puzzling. Finally, and the evidence for this is inconclusive, it may well be that East Europeans are becoming more accustomed to the adversarial nature of democratic politics, and more comfortable with political parties as an institution.

Tables and Figures

Table 1.1. ESTIMATION RESULTS: TRUST IN PARTIES

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error
Competition	-0.420***	(0.1)
Comp*Not very close	-0.100	(0.2)
Comp*Fairly close	0.098	(0.1)
Comp*Very close	0.400**	(0.2)
Electoral System	-0.030	(0.2)
Gini Coefficient	0.063**	(0.03)
Catholic	-0.260	(0.4)
Independence of Media	0.250	(0.4)
Freedom of Press	-0.076**	(0.04)
NIT Democracy	0.420	(0.4)
Self-interested	-0.740***	(0.09)
Not very close	0.460	(0.8)
Fairly close	0.220	(0.4)
Very close	-0.380	(0.7)
Newspaper	0.099**	(0.04)
Dem. Satisfaction	0.210***	(0.02)
Size of community	-0.042	(0.03)
Trust-neighbors	0.480***	(0.06)
Trust-coworkers	0.590***	(0.07)
Income	0.074***	(0.03)
Age	0.008***	(0.003)
Sex	-0.150*	(0.08)
Constant	-0.900	(1.6)
Observations	6128	

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 1.2. ESTIMATION RESULTS: VOTING AND WORKING FOR PARTY

Voted in last parliamentary elections			Work for Party	
Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	Coefficient	Std. Error
Trust Parties	0.110**	(0.050)	0.523***	(0.058)
Membership	0.010	(0.039)	0.324***	(0.041)
Post-materialism	0.123***	(0.045)	-0.178***	(0.060)
Party ID	0.534***	(0.039)	0.384***	(0.042)
Discuss	0.347***	(0.038)	0.748***	(0.055)
Dem. Satisfaction	0.076***	(0.018)	-0.015	(0.021)
Size of community	-0.188***	(0.022)	-0.082***	(0.028)
Education	0.379***	(0.058)	0.195***	(0.074)
Income	0.070***	(0.022)	0.070**	(0.028)
Age	0.029***	(0.002)	-0.001	(0.003)
Sex	-0.030	(0.066)	0.133	(0.085)
Constant	0.352	(0.398)	0.332	(0.381)
Observations	6814		6941	

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Figure 1.1. MARGINAL EFFECTS OF COMPETITION ON TRUST BY PARTY ID

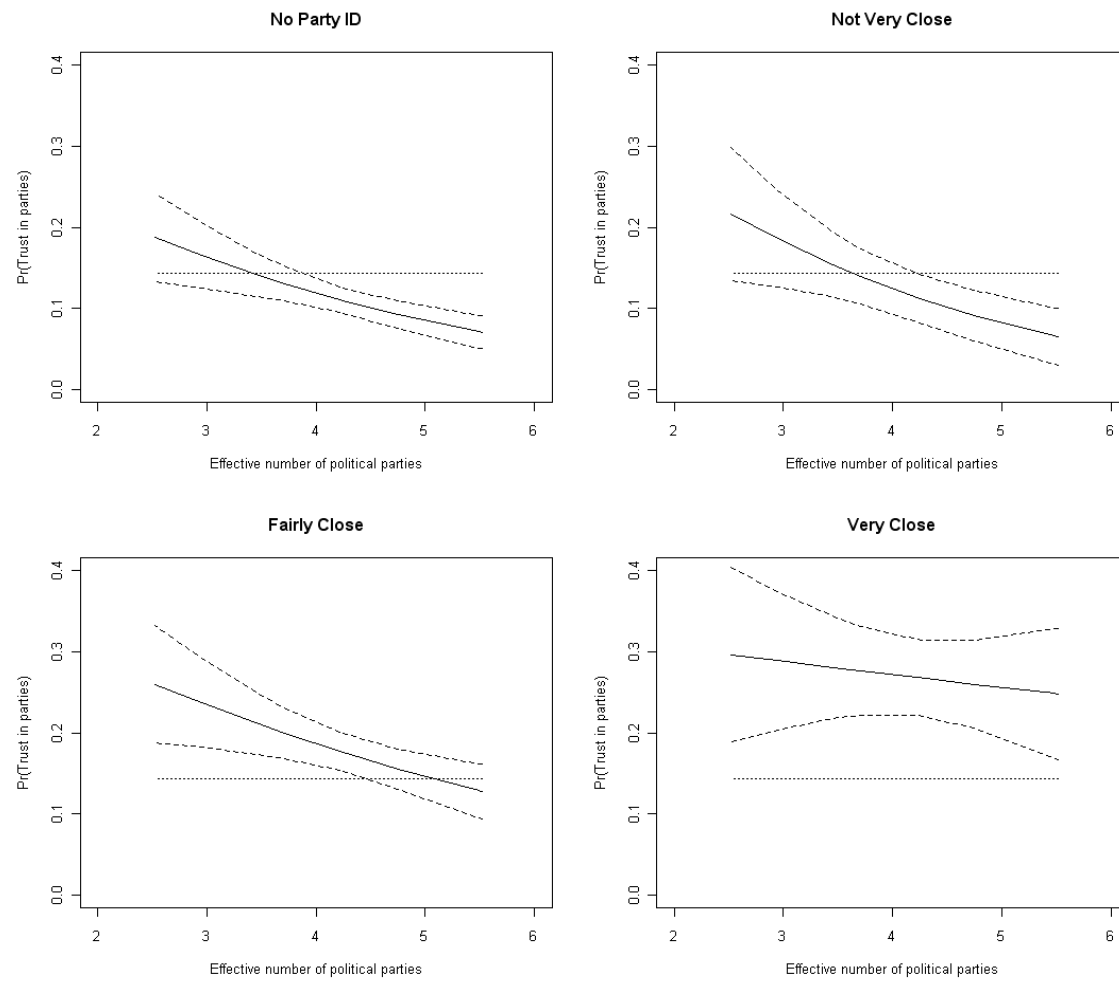
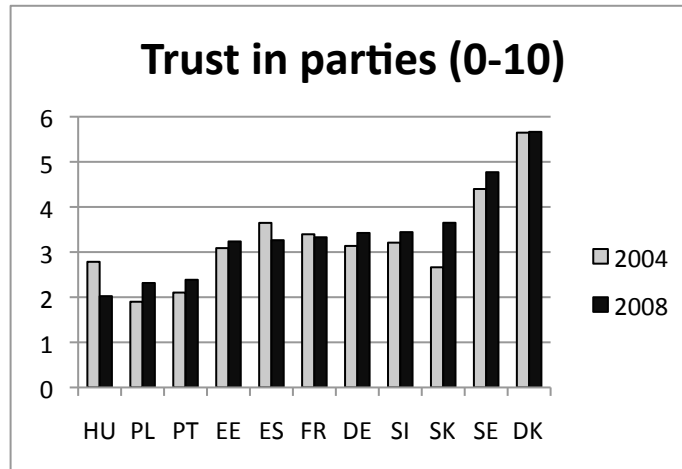


Figure 1.2. TRUST IN PARTIES OVER TIME



Sources: European Social Surveys (ESS), round 2 and round 4

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Malaise or Virtuous Circle? Media ownership, political trust and satisfaction with democracy in Eastern Europe

More than two decades have passed since the collapse of communist regimes in Europe and we have seen different paths away from communism, but no common path towards liberal democracy. While certain countries have made much more progress than others (i.e. the ten East Central European states that have joined the European Union), imperfect and fragile democratic institutions are widespread in the entire post-communist world.

One such institution is the free media. The transformation of the media has followed broader societal change and has closely mirrored the extent to which the political system has moved away from authoritarianism. The struggle to create free and independent media outlets has been a difficult one, not least so because politicians understand the importance of media in shaping public opinion and acquiring political power. Thus, a partially free media environment marked by widespread political interference in the scope and content of media coverage has been a key feature of the transition. The role of media in shaping political attitudes in Eastern Europe has remained understudied, however, despite the media's recognized potential to greatly influence peoples' orientations and beliefs.

Moreover, no study has systematically explored how media ownership affects the content and framing of news and consequently political attitudes. Foreign ownership of media has been a striking feature of the media landscape in post-communist Europe with

multinational media conglomerates such as the News Corporation, Axel Springer, and Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (WAZ) being key players in the new media markets of this region. Do foreign media report differently than locally owned ones? Does exposure to foreign media matter for public opinion? The presence of foreign-owned media in the media markets of Eastern Europe has been understudied because it has largely been seen as a sign of progress, bringing greater diversity and competition along with much needed foreign direct investment. Surprisingly, the foreign-owned media may undermine democracy in some ways even as it diversifies the media landscape.

In this paper I introduce a theory about the effects of media exposure on political attitudes based on the ownership of different television media. Does exposure to media lead to cynicism and apathy or does it reinforce political interest and knowledge? I explore whether the media has played a role in fueling the widespread disenchantment with democracy in Eastern Europe as evidenced in many studies. Here I investigate whether the frequency with which people follow news, both in broadcast and print (television and newspapers), leads to higher levels of trust in key political institutions and support for democracy. The results suggest that while newspaper readership is positively related to a host of indicators of political trust and satisfaction, exposure to television does not have the same straightforward effect.

Next, I argue that the effect of media exposure on attitudes depends on the ownership structure of the media outlets. Specifically, I argue that more exposure to state owned TV media increases the level of political trust and satisfaction with the political system. The logic here is that the closer the ties between governing parties and the media, the less critical the news will be. Thus, people who are exposed to such media outlets will

be less likely to be cynical of political institutions (i.e. video-malaise). In other words, given that most state-owned media are controlled by the governing parties of the day, the news coverage will tend to be more positive and focus less on the failures and more on the achievements of the government.

In contrast, if media outlets are owned by foreigners, the news coverage will be more negative and sensational, thus fueling political distrust. One might expect that the entry of foreign-owned media in the markets and the professionalism they bring would be good for the media environment –and good for democracy more generally. Surprisingly, this is highly debatable. First, the content of foreign media tends to be negative, sensationalist, and shallow. Second, such content undermines political trust and satisfaction with democracy, which we know depresses participation (Ceka, 2013). Finally, the content and the tone of news coverage in media that are neither state owned nor foreign dominated is hard to predict a priori, because of the unpredictable alliances between the owners of such media and political actors. I elaborate more on this in the theory section.

The countries included in the core analysis include the ten Eastern European members of the EU plus Croatia and Macedonia. To test the hypothesis advanced in this paper, I rely on multi-level modeling. This paper contributes to theory building in comparative politics by painting a more nuanced picture of the media landscape and proposing a theory about the effect of ownership of media on political attitudes. It speaks to the diverging literatures that find contradictory effects of media exposure on attitudes and provides a more complete understanding of the conditional effect of media on public opinion. Empirically, this paper relies on several kinds of data, including an original

dataset I have constructed with the ownership structure of the main television outlets in 12 countries in Eastern Europe, to test the empirical implications of the theory. Thus, this paper takes an innovative approach by matching the ownership data for TV stations with individual level exposure to such media. I now turn to the literature on the effect of media on public opinion.

Video malaise or virtuous circle?

Two broad positions emerge from the large body of work that has studied the relationship between media coverage and political engagement. Some scholars have argued that the media has a negative impact on public perception, while others have argued that the media has a positive impact on political attitudes. Lang & Lang (1966) were the first ones to make a connection between the proliferation of news outlets in the U.S. and the rising tide of political disenchantment witnessed in the 1960s. However, it was Robinson (1976) who popularized the term “video-malaise” (also media malaise), to emphasize the fact that exposure to television news and not to newspapers was related to political disaffection. Since then, theories of video-malaise have dominated the literature, especially in the United States, but also in other parts of the world (see for e.g. Patterson, 1993; 2002; Moy & Pfau, 2000; Nye, Zelikow & King, 1997; Putnam, 2000).

A related strand of literature emphasizes the tone of media coverage of political events for political dissatisfaction. The argument put forth by this literature draws attention to the negative effect of watchdog journalism and the tendency to scandalize corruption in public life (Garment, 1991). Content analyses of news media have shown that negative reporting has increased over time. For example, Kepplinger (2000) finds that the image of political elites in Germany has been in decline since the 1960s and that

this is partly due to the increasingly negative press coverage of politicians' qualities (i.e. honesty, credibility, and integrity) and their competency (i.e. poor decision-making capabilities and knowledgeability).

The literature on media malaise is an important one but the causal mechanisms are not always clear and accounts of what causes this 'malaise' vary (Norris, 2000; Comstock & Scharrer, 2005). Some scholars emphasize structural factors such as market pressures that move news media down-market. Others blame the tendency of media to frame politicians as greedy and pursuing their self-interest and not as running on principles or the desire to serve the public. The horse-race metaphors and the corresponding jargon that dominates discourse on Presidential races in the US, but also in other places, has tainted the image of politicians (e.g. frontrunner, field of candidates, down to the wire, black horse etc.). Add to this the growth of political campaigning and the accompanying spin-doctors, pollsters, campaign consultants, and the image of a race or a strategic game between calculating and self-interested politicians is firmly cemented in the public consciousness (Norris, 2000).

The European literature on media malaise tends to emphasize the demise of public-service broadcasting and the rise of commercial channels, which emphasize the more sensational and negative aspects of political news (Schulz, 1997, 1998). Similarly, scholars have voiced widespread concern about the 'tabloidization' and 'infotainment' (i.e. *Sun* and *Der Bild*) that has occurred in print media as a result of competition (Norris, 2000).

The most persuasive empirical accounts of media malaise come from experimental studies. Robinson (1976) conducted an experiment in which 212 subjects

were shown a controversial documentary, *The selling of Pentagon*, and found that political efficacy, or the belief that one can influence public affairs, decreased as a result of seeing this particular documentary. Similarly, Ansolabehere & Iyengar (1995) showed that negative news decreases voter turnout and political efficacy in the United States. Other experimental studies, however, found that exposure to negative news did not damage party support while positive news tended to bolster it (Norris et al. 1999). Recent research has shown that levels of sophistication and prior attitudinal orientations such as party identification greatly condition the extent to which negative coverage increases disaffection (Lau & Rovner, 2009; Westen, 2007).

Some authors have suggested differentiated effects based on the source of news. For example, Robinson (1974) found that those who watched television news had lower political efficacy, higher social distrust, and weaker party identification than those who get their political news from newspapers, radios, and magazines. Similarly, research has shown that use of magazines and newspapers is associated with more favorable opinions about public institutions while exposure to network news is associated with less favorable evaluations of such institutions (Moy & Pfau, 2000). Thus, some have argued that the rise of television has seen a fall in newspaper readership, which historically has been a strong predictor of civic participation (Putnam, 1995; 1996).

While plausible, the key insights coming from this line of thought have been heavily criticized on both theoretical and empirical basis. Norris (2000; 2011) has been one of the most forceful proponents of the “virtuous circle” theory that suggests that people who show greater interest in politics and have higher levels of sophistication tend to seek out political news coverage. Thus higher exposure to media through more

frequent watching of TV news, or the habitual use of newspapers and the Internet, reinforces practical knowledge, political trust, and civic activism. Others have shown that negative coverage of politically relevant social issues energizes political participation by raising awareness and drawing attention to important problems (Martin, 2008).

Most of the research on the effects of media on political attitudes and behavior has been conducted within the U.S. It is still unclear whether the patterns found in the U.S. apply to other political contexts. Among other things, there are marked differences between the media market in the U.S. and elsewhere. Thus, as Norris (2000) has persuasively argued, our best strategy is to do comparative work that overcomes the national and time limitations of prior research.

More generally, mass media plays an important role in any society. Its power to influence and fundamentally shape public opinion and behavior inspires awe and fear. How has the existing research conceptualized the role of media in a democratic society? I now turn to the research that explores this question.

Media and politics

Norris (2000: 23) situates the role of media within a wider, Schumpeterian tradition of thinking about representative democracy, which is characterized by pluralistic competition, participation by citizens, and civil and political liberties. Based on this framework, media play three crucial roles: (1) they act as a civic forum for pluralistic debate, (2) they serve as a watchdog for civil and political liberties, and (3) they act as a mobilizing agent for public participation.

Media as a civic forum is based on Habermas's influential idea that a public sphere provides for discussion of public affairs in a civic society (Habermas, 1984, 1998).

Habermas was very critical of the rise of the popular press, and the concentration of ownership of media outlets because he feared that such developments would shift the debate from the “real” sphere to the “virtual” one. However, media have today become a civic forum where different voices can be heard that facilitates communication between voters and representatives. Even in the context of Eastern Europe, where vested economic and political interests tightly control media, the media’s function as a public forum is still important. In fact, Gross (2002: 148-9) has gone so far as to claim that, “[t]he highly politicized, pluralistic, opinionated and judgmental journalism with neither shared standards nor a professional, democratic-minded culture that prevails in Eastern Europe not only represents civil society, but *is* civil society.”

One of the more prominent roles of media is to act a watchdog and protect the public interest. According to this conception, media should scrutinize those in power and hold them accountable for their actions. Investigative journalism plays a crucial role here as it bears the promise of exposing corruption, corporate scandals, and government failures. Some have argued that the media have taken their watchdog role to the extreme and that the widespread public disaffection in the U.S. and Western Europe is partly due to the overzealous media (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997). As I discuss in the theory section, in the case of Eastern Europe, the role of the watchdog is highly dependent on the ownership structure of the specific media outlets and the economic interests they are beholden to. In cases with high political control of media outlets, media can act as overzealous ‘watchdogs’ for the rival political group but as ‘lapdogs’ for the favored party. More generally, research has shown that the tighter the government control on

media is the more likely that media will play a lapdog role and not a watchdog one (Whitten-Woodring, 2009).

Finally, media can act as mobilizing agents by increasing political knowledge and interest, which has a positive impact on voting and civic activism. The extent to which media plays this role is hotly contested and there is little agreement on the literature about the empirical foundations of this argument. The findings are contradictory and context-specific, implying that for some people exposure to media increases political interest and activism, while for others it depresses them because of what Mann and Ornstein (1994: 1) has called “corrosive cynicism.”

Whether media can successfully fulfill the three roles discussed above is largely dependent on the societal forces that compete for media access and control. As Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm (1956: 1-2) remarked more than half a century ago, “the press always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates. Especially, it reflects the system of social control whereby the relations of individuals and institutions are adjusted.” Therefore, I now turn to extant theories about the link between media and politics.

In a highly influential and widely cited study, Hallin & Mancini (2004) propose three models of media and politics: the Liberal Model (Britain, Ireland, and North America), the Democratic Corporatist Model (northern continental Europe), and the Polarized Pluralist Model (Mediterranean countries of Southern Europe). The authors claim that four dimensions are crucial for mapping out different media systems: (1) the development of the mass circulation press, (2) political parallelism or the links between media and political parties, (3) journalistic professionalism, and (4) the degree of state

intervention in media. Here I focus on the last three dimensions because they are particularly helpful for thinking through media systems in Eastern Europe.

The concept of political parallelism provides a useful starting point for analyzing the media landscape in Eastern Europe. According to Hallin & Mancini (2004: 27) “political parallelism” refers to the “the extent to which the structure of the media system paralleled that of the party system” (p. 27). It can be manifested through media content and close links between the two worlds, politically active journalists and media-owners, partisanship of the media audiences, and journalistic role orientations or basic professional identities (i.e. impartial provider of information vs. opinion leader).

The economic vulnerability of media in Eastern Europe provides an opportunity for political and business interests to have a great influence over this sector. One of the key ways through which such interests influence media is by buttressing unprofitable but non-bankrupt media (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013). More generally speaking, advertising and market pressures do not seem to drive the editorial policies of many outlets because they are financially supported by business interest closely tied to the different political blocs. Such media are thus protected from competition. Advertising, to the extent that such media rely on them at all, tend to come from businesses that are politically aligned with the different parties regardless of readership or viewership (Hrvatín, Kučić, & Petković, 2004).

In this sense, political parallelism is a widespread phenomenon in the region (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013). Different political interests control or at least influence parts of the media landscape and are thus able to exert tremendous influence. As Mungiu-Pippidi (2013: 41) puts it, “a good media investment can make a minister or an MP, as well as

unseat one”. The outcome of this alarming situation is that, “captured media outlets emerge to trade influence and manipulate information rather than inform the public. (p. 41)”

When it comes to influencing media, one group of political actors has a clear advantage over its competitors at any given point. Namely, governing parties have more resources because of state-capture or the business interests that support them, and thus are better positioned to “buy” influence. For example, governments subsidize friendly media by channeling state advertising funds or, in some cases, EU funds to those outlets that take a pro-government stance (Štětka, 2011: 5)

Material resources are not the only way through which governments controls media. As Hallin & Mancini (2013:24) remind us, “it is important to keep in mind that state *inaction* is often itself a form of political intervention, as politicians support media enterprises politically aligned with them by exempting them from legal regulation.” By the same token, media deemed to be unfriendly or downright opposed to the governing parties might suddenly become subject to strict application of existing laws. The fate of the A1 TV in Macedonia, the largest privately owned TV station in the country, is a prime example. This TV station was eventually shut down in 2011 because the owner, and other key people in the organization, were indicted of tax fraud. What provoked the wrath of the government? Scathing criticism of the ruling VMRO-DMPNE party and clear bias towards the largest opposition party. It is important to note that, by all accounts, the owner of A1 was in fact guilty of the crime he was charged with. But, so are other businessmen in Macedonia. Tax evasion is widespread in this country but the law is applied selectively to punish media outlets that are critical of the government

(Igric, n.d.). This brings to mind the memorable quote by Brazil's one time president Getulio Vargas who once said "For my friends, anything - for my enemies, the law" (Plummer, 2005).

However, in a crucial departure from the Western model of political parallelism, where the leaning of the different media is steady,¹ the links between the media and political parties are more fleeting in the East. In the West, political cleavages run deeper and the media have distinct political identifications that are easily discernable and that remain stable over time (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). In the East, there is much more electoral volatility and parties have far shallower roots in the society, which has hindered the establishment of stable links between particular media outlets and parties. Furthermore, the uneasy marriage between media outlets and political parties is primarily based on material interest and not on ideology. Thus, as the fortunes of political actors change so does their relationship to the media.

In fact, in some cases the consolidation of ownership in the hands of few powerful moguls has decreased the leverage that political parties have over the media. So, these media moguls and individual journalists sell coverage to politicians and businesses and the alliances they form with their clients are fleeting. The most glaring examples come from Romania and Bulgaria. Cristian Tudor Popescu and Ion Cristoiu, otherwise well-regarded journalists in Romania, have supported sworn political enemies at different points in time, raising suspicion of opportunism (Coman, 2013:175). In Bulgaria, Irena Krasteva's New Bulgarian Media Group, a dominant player in the media market, waged a viciously negative and, at times, very personal campaign against the leader of the largest

¹ For example, in France *Le Monde* and *Liberation* have a left-center bias, while *le Figaro* and *France-Soir* have a right-center bias (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

opposition party Boyko Borisov during the 2009 parliamentary elections. Only a day after the elections, all the media owned by Krasteva started having a sycophantically positive coverage of Borisov and his government (Štětka, 2011). This unscrupulous journalistic culture is not confined to the two poorest members of the EU however. Based on recent documents leaked through WikiLeaks, the U.S. embassy in Lithuania had discussed the existence of detailed “price lists” for purchasing favorable coverage in the largest national newspapers (Örnebring, 2011b; Jegelevicius 2011).

Perhaps the most radical departure from Western practices occurs in the public broadcasting sector. In the West, this sector is either independent or control is diffuse and shared among different political parties in the parliament and civil society actors (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). In Eastern Europe, the situation is dramatically different. The governing parties tend to have a firm grip on state media and largely dictate the editorial content.² As Table 2.1 shows, from the ten post-communist members of the EU, state intervention in media more generally is high in all but Slovenia and Estonia. However, when it comes to state-owned media, the government is quite active in Estonia too (Örnebring, 2011a) and certainly has influence over the managers of public media in Slovenia as evidenced by the frequent changes in the leadership of these media when power changes (Hrvatín, Kučić, & Petković, 2004). As Gross (2002: 58) has remarked, there “is the deep conviction that the media exist to serve the government or the state.” Such convictions are particularly true regarding state owned media. This is an enduring

² The state or the political majority in government can control public-broadcasting services in the West as well. The case of DeGaulle in the 1960s and his complete subordination of public broadcasting is a famous example from Western Europe. DeGaulle accomplished this by controlling appointments to the formally independent office for regulating public broadcast. However, this kind of behavior is a rarity in the West nowadays (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

legacy of communism because of the strong emphasis the communist parties put on media in their attempt to transform and control the societies in which they ruled.

The situation is much more dire in post-communist countries that are not part of the EU and which certainly have more corruption. In sum, the ruling parties control state broadcasting in Eastern Europe and, as I discuss in the next section, this has important implications for the content of such media and, consequently, for evaluations of the performance of the political system.

The last two dimensions for analyzing media systems are professionalization of journalism and state intervention in media. Since I already discussed the latter in the context of political parallelism, I now turn to journalistic professionalism. While it might seem easy to pin down in the first blush, there is no universally accepted set of high standards for professional journalism and the norms that do develop are dependent on the national context (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). For example, historically speaking, American journalistic professionalism has been built around impartiality and “truthful” reporting of news. This ethos is nicely captured by a famous quote by Joseph & Stewart Alsop (1958: 5), who said that “[h]is feet are much more important part of a reporter’s body than his head.” In other countries, the norm of impartial reporting is not emphasized as much. In general, journalistic professionalism is characterized by independence, distinct professional norms (e.g. obligation to protect confidential sources, separate advertising from editorial content, and standards of excellence), and public service orientation (i.e. the extent to which journalists feel that they serve the public) (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

As Table 2.1 shows, journalistic professionalism is rather low in most of the CEE countries. Only Poland and Slovenia can boast to have somewhat more professional

journalistic culture, but no country can be said to have a high level professionalism in this industry. Admittedly, there is more variation in professionalism and media quality among the countries of Table 2.1, which is not captured by Hallin & Mancini's (2004) four dimensions. But, as Gross (2002: 108) has aptly put it, "Eastern European journalists have not developed a professional culture strong enough to counterbalance the political forces that dominate their societies."

Some scholars portray an even grimmer picture of the situation. Mungiu-Pippidi (2013) has argued that there is a lack of ethical norms that guide journalism in Eastern Europe and that everything is up for sale to the highest bidder. Similarly, Coman (2013:178), referring to corrupt media moguls in Romania, says that, "[a]ll these journalists, rich, famous and corrupt, flawlessly exploit doublespeak; they publicly exaggerate their roles as defenders of freedom of expression and cynically promote their personal interests behind this façade." Others are less damning and have suggested that in other East European countries (e.g. Czech Republic), media seems to be much more independent and professional, and deeply influenced by Western ideas of "professional journalism" (Jiráček & Köpplová, 2013: 186)

What determines whether Eastern European journalists become independent and adopt a "Western" style of journalism? Here Siebert, Peterson & Schramm's (1956) incisive claim that media simply reflect the deeper societal and political structures is crucial (see also Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013). In other words, countries with endemic corruption in all nooks of society have little in the form of either formal or informal journalistic ethics. As already discussed, media in such countries are either dominated by

local moguls or directly controlled by political and business interests. In other countries, where corruption levels are lower, there is a higher degree of professionalism.

A largely unexplored question is whether foreign ownership of media tends to influence the journalistic culture of the host country. There is a very strong foreign presence in the ownership of major media outlets throughout Eastern Europe. However, there is little research systematically investigating the relationship between foreign ownership and media development in this region (e.g. Waschкова Cisarova, 2008).

As the rest of this paper will argue, foreign media have a fundamentally different approach to the media market. Given that they usually are part of larger multinational media conglomerate coming from Western Europe (e.g. WAZ), they are more professional, less economically vulnerable and, thus, less likely to be “captured” by local business and political interests. Foreign owned media are primarily driven by the logic of market competition and they depend on advertising revenues. When times get really tough, as they have during the recent great recession in Europe, they simply pack up and leave as witnessed by the exodus of foreign owned media from Bulgaria (Štětka, 2011).

When foreign and local media compete for audience and advertising market share, there tends to be tension depending on how closely the local media are backed by shadow economic actors. For example, the WAZ Group filed a lawsuit against the locally owned New Bulgarian Media (NBM) because of its unfair advantage in the market due to subsidies from actors with political links. The NBM, as the Bulgarian regulatory authorities independently confirmed in 2010, was engaged in price dumping to drive out competition (Štětka, 2011).

The presence of foreign media in a given country has implications beyond the media market. The next section offers a theory of how exposure to different types of media affects trust in and satisfaction with democracy.

Theory

At the heart of the theoretical framework presented here is the ownership structure of media. The goal is to present a coherent account of the effect of media on satisfaction with the political system conditional on ownership.

I make three main arguments. First, I argue that while reading newspapers is in fact related to higher political trust and satisfaction with democracy, higher exposure to television broadcast does not have the same straightforward effect. Second, I argue that, due to economic pressures, foreign owned media employ more negative coverage and use negative frames more frequently in their newscasts. In contrast, state owned media report on more positive things and the frames are less negative. Third, and directly derived from the second argument, I argue that exposure to state owned media is related to higher levels of satisfaction with the political system while more exposure to foreign owned media has the opposite effect.

The virtuous circle

I agree with Norris (2000; 2011), who suggests that people who show greater interest in politics and have higher levels of sophistication tend to seek out political news coverage. Thus, in line with the virtuous circle theory, I argue that the habitual reading of newspapers reinforces practical knowledge, political trust, and satisfaction with democracy.

However, newspapers are not a major source of news for many Eastern Europeans. The first column of Table 2.2 presents the weighted percentage of survey respondents who indicated that they spend at least 30 minutes a day reading news in newspapers. Only in Estonia and Bulgaria do people read as much as they do in Western Europe. On average, only about 17 percent of Eastern Europeans regularly read news in newspapers, while 26 percent do so in the West (see also bottom of Table 2.2). In contrast, more than half of the respondents from Eastern Europe claim to spend at least half an hour watching news on TV every day. So, television is a far more important source of news for people in this region. It should be noted that Western Europeans spend more time watching news on TV than do people from the Mediterranean, who are more similar to Eastern Europeans in this regard.

But, what is the effect of news consumption from TV? I argue that exposure to such media does not have the same straightforward effect on political attitudes as exposure to print media does. I elaborate on this more below.

Different owners different coverage

The key theoretical contribution of this article is to specify a more nuanced causal mechanism in which the ownership of media matters for both the content and tone of coverage and, consequently, for political attitudes. As discussed earlier, state-owned media, which still continue to be dominant players in the television broadcast market in Eastern Europe, are by and large firmly under the control of the ruling parties, and thus are biased in favor of such parties. The control comes from three sources. First, the government, or the parliament that they control, sets the subscription fees and thus

controls one of the main sources of revenues for public broadcasting. Second, in many countries the law limits the percentage of total revenues that can come from advertising. For example, the Bulgarian public service TV is limited to only fifteen minutes a day of advertising, and only four minutes of advertising can be shown during prime time (Štětka, 2011). Similarly, in 2011 the parliament in Czech removed advertising from public news channels altogether (Štětka, 2012a). By severely restricting this stream of revenues to public broadcasting, successive governments are able to curtail the independence of such media. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, ruling parties get to appoint the boards of the state media (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2011; Štětka, 2011). This phenomenon is widespread and not only restricted to countries with high corruption.

If this is the case, and the government of the day has tremendous influence over public broadcasting, what do the governments do with their power? I argue that news coverage and the tone in such media tends to be generally more positive. They focus less on social ailments, for which the government could be legitimately blamed, and spend more time emphasizing the achievements of the government. Depending on how blatant the control is, the public service TV can become a PR platform for the rulers and a mouthpiece of the government. The Moldovan case is a good example of such practices. A 2007 study with content analysis of in news public service TV, Moldova 1, revealed that this outlet spends an inordinate amount of time showing the Moldovan President Voronin opening tractor stations, visiting farms, and presenting positive economic news, never mind the fact that Moldova is one of the poorest countries in Europe (Udovičić, 2007). While of course not all public TV stations are as “captured” as Moldova 1, as I

will show later, such media tend to have more positive coverage and tone, with important implications for political attitudes.

However, the situation is rather different when the owners of media are foreigners. I argue that the news coverage in foreign owned media is more sensational, scandal-driven, and overall more negative. But, why should foreign media rely on sensationalization and negative framing in news reporting? There are two interrelated reasons for this. First, news reporting on scandals, crime, corruption, social ailments and incompetence draws more audience than less dramatic coverage. In other words, quotidian news reporting about the dull business of politics does not sell as well as reporting on juicy sexual trespassing of politicians, gruesome murders, or financial malfeasance. As Helena Luczywo, an editor at *Gazeta Wyborcza* in Warsaw, once remarked about foreign-owned media, "When the consumer is king, there is a tendency to cater to the lowest tastes (Dempsey, 2004)." Since foreign media rely on advertising and not on support from political actors as their main source of revenues, such media outlets tend to report in a fashion that attracts audience, hence the tabloidization. Research from Western Europe has shown that market competition has in fact increased 'tabloidization' and 'infotainment' (Schulz, 1997, 1998).

The second reason as to why foreign media in Eastern Europe would resort to sensationalization is their internal structure and business philosophy. The Western media conglomerates that are responsible for the rise in negative coverage in West are the same ones that come to the East. When they come to the new media landscape, they bring their time-tested corporate practices with them as well.

To sum up, foreign media, unlike domestic ones, are less likely to rely on local clientelistic networks for revenues. They rely on ads and paid programming instead. Therefore, commercialization of media leads to competition for audiences and thus an increased reliance on lurid language, vivid imagery, and exaggerated scandals.

One might wonder about the content and the tone of news coverage in media that are neither state owned nor foreign dominated (i.e. privately owned domestic media). For such media, it is difficult to say a priori what the coverage will look like. It will greatly depend on who controls them and what the individual agendas of the owners are. For example, until it closed down in 2011, A1 TV in Macedonia was the most watched channel in the country and its owner was clearly siding with the opposition. Therefore the coverage was overly negative, especially against the government. In contrast, in Montenegro, the largest privately owned TV station, TV IN, has been close to the government led by Prime Minister Milo Đukanović and TV IN's coverage has been largely uncritical of the government. More generally speaking, the more independent a media outlet is and the more it relies on market mechanisms for its revenues, the more it will approximate the foreign-owned media in their negative reporting and focus on sensational news. Such reporting is primarily due to the audience's insatiable appetite for such coverage, and the consequent rating boost and advertising that come with it.

Different coverage different effects on political attitudes

Do differences in the content and tone of coverage matter for political attitudes? I argue that they do. Specifically, given its more positive coverage and tone, exposure to state-owned media is related to higher evaluations of the political system. This does not imply that the state of democracy is better in a given country if more people tune in to

public broadcasting. It only means that the framing of the news will be more positive, thus fewer opportunities for video-malaise to manifest itself. By the same logic, higher exposure to sensationalist foreign media should lead to more politically cynical and disenchanted consumers.

But, why do coverage and tone matter for political attitudes? Media content and framing are crucial to understanding the effects that exposure to media has on political trust and satisfaction with the performance of the political system. As Watzlawick, Beavin & Jackson (1967) pointed out in their seminal work, there is an important conceptual distinction between ‘command’ and ‘report’ in communication. The first deals with what is said or the content of communication whereas the latter refers to *how* things are said or communicated. This distinction highlights the importance of language and presentation style for the communicating act and emphasizes the independent effect of the frame, which serves to augment what is said.

In the context of political opinion formation, research has shown that the framing of politics as dominated by “races,” where self-interested politicians compete with one another, can greatly increase the cynicism that citizens have towards the political. Just as importantly, when a frame is used, as Cappella & Jamieson (1997:42) have suggested, “[a] preexisting set of knowledge, including concepts, procedures, and, most important, their interconnection, has been cued and brought into conscious awareness.”

It is important to note that while in the U.S. the strategic frame predominates news coverage on politics, in Eastern Europe things are much more dire. In many cases, the direct frame is corruption or strong insinuations of self-interested behavior on the part of the political elite. In this context, the framing used in scandalizing news brings forth

deeply embedded notions about the corrupt nature of politicians and their self-interested endeavors. These cues are readily available because of the widespread cynicism that already exists about the motivations of politicians and the parties they run—this a deep legacy of authoritarian rule during communism.

However, not all sensationalist coverage is about corruption. Rarely do media outlets go in all-out war with political elites and expose corruption. A great deal of the sensational reporting focuses on social ills such as crime, disasters, poverty and other misfortunes. Yet, if the content and framing is negative, a similar set of interconnected knowledge and biases are made salient because of preexisting beliefs about incompetence, lack of concern for the public and self-interestedness of politicians. In other words, more negative reporting on crime and the breakdown of the social fabric (e.g. poverty) will have the effect of reducing public confidence in the willingness and ability of democratically elected representatives to solve these problems. Eastern Europeans are particularly susceptible to being affected by such coverage because crime was kept under check during communism and social ailments were mitigated by the state safety net. It is not surprising that, in conversations with people who remember living under communism, nostalgia for former system is oftentimes manifested in the need for order and strong leadership that would keep problems like crime and poverty under control. I now turn to the research design and discuss the empirical strategy employed to test the arguments put forth in this section.

Data, operationalization, and research design

The data come from three main sources. First, I test the more fine-grained hypotheses about the effect of media ownership on political attitudes by relying on a

special Eurobarometer survey (68.1) that was conducted between September and November of 2007. This survey has detailed survey items on media use by outlet for the following Eastern European countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. This survey is unique in its coverage of media use patterns in Europe and includes two Balkans countries besides the ten post-communist members of the EU, thus, making it an excellent one for the purposes of this paper. Its main limitation is that it does not offer detailed information about the frequency with which people consume media. For that reason, I also rely on the most recent wave (5th) of European Social Surveys (ESS) that was conducted in 2010 and that has a number survey items regarding the frequency of media use for a variety of media, but not for specific media outlets. The ESS includes all the ten post-communist members of the EU except Latvia plus Ukraine and Russia.

The second source of data I use is summaries of content analysis of TV prime time domestic news in ten South East European countries. The project was conducted in 2007 by the Media Plan Institute - Sarajevo with partner organizations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia.³ The findings and the country reports were published in an edited book by Radenko Udovičić (2007). The researchers identified two media outlets for each country—the primetime news programs of the public broadcaster and the strongest commercial channel. They followed these media for one month between April 1 and April 30, and, among other things, coded the content as well as orientation or attitude to the subjects covered (i.e. framing). Specifically, both content and framing were coded

³ Accessed from <http://www.mediaplan.ba/docs/Prezentacija/intro.htm>, on February 5, 2013.

using three categories, negative, neutral, and positive yielding, “for example, negative content with neutral journalist's attitude (e.g. speaking about increasing crime in Sarajevo, but presented objectively and impartially by the journalist). Or, positive content and negative attitude (e.g. reporting on rising living standard in Serbia, but the journalists comments that the country does not deserve this because of involvement in the war in BiH).⁴”

The main drawback of this data is that it does not include all the countries analyzed in the regression analyses. That said, there is no reason to suppose that the proposed causal mechanisms about the effect of ownership on news content and tone do not apply to the entire post-communist world. Thus, this data is invaluable because it comparatively investigates the content as well as the frame of news coverage across 10 countries from different parts of post-communist Europe. Furthermore, it does so for TV media, which, as already discussed, are by far the most important source of news for people in this region. The data for the economic country-level variables come from World Bank's World Development Indicators. I use indicators for GDP growth (annual %), unemployment, and GNI per capita. I also use the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI).

Finally, I rely on qualitative country reports from the Media and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe (MDCEE) project based of Oxford University⁵. The country reports are extensive and categorize the different media systems based on Hallin & Mancini's (2004) three media systems dimensions and typology, which I use in this paper.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Accessed from <http://mde.politics.ox.ac.uk/index.php/country-reports>, on February 5, 2013.

As for the dependent variables, (1) I have constructed latent variables using scores from factor analysis and (2) I rely on individual indicators of satisfaction with democracy. Specifically, I have constructed a latent variable tapping into political trust⁶ using survey items about trust in the national parliament, trust in the legal system, and trust in the police. For the Eurobarometer survey, I rely on an item that asks respondents the following question: On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (OUR COUNTRY)? I have dichotomized this variable to take a value of 1 if respondents answer very satisfied or fairly satisfied and 0 otherwise.⁷

For the analysis using data from the ESS survey, in addition to the political trust factor, which constructed using the same three variables of political trust as in the Eurobarometer survey, I construct another latent variable that uses information from these three questions: On the whole how satisfied are you with the present state of the economy in [country]? Now thinking about the [country] government, how satisfied are you with the way it is doing its job? And on the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [country]? Only one factor with an eigenvalue higher than 1 emerged out of this factor analysis, indicating that the score measures one dimension of macro government satisfaction. The goal of using the second set of variables about satisfaction with how democracy works is to test whether the results about the effect of media on attitudes are robust when broader macro indicators of performance are used.

⁶ Both the Eurobarometer and the ESS5 survey ask respondents to indicate their political trust, but the former relies on dummy variables taking a value of 1 if a person trusts a particular institutions, while the latter presents a more fine-grained scale from 1-10 (extremely dissatisfied-extremely satisfied). The factor analysis reveals that in both cases we are tapping into political trust because only one factor has an eigenvalue greater than 1.

⁷ I could not do the same dichotomization for the ESS survey data because the scale for the satisfaction with democracy variable runs from 1-10.

Regarding the key independent variables of interest, I have constructed a number of variables measuring exposure to different types of media. First, since I am interested in the effects of ownership on political attitudes, I have created a dataset with information about the most watched TV stations and their ownership structure for all the ten post-communist members of the EU plus Croatia and Macedonia. In this dataset, each public broadcaster has been coded as state owned and each TV channel with more than 50% stake by a foreign person or company has been coded as foreign owned. Most of the data for the coding came from the country reports published by the *Media and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe (MDCEE)* project. Since MDCEE did not have reports for Croatia and Macedonia, I relied on country reports from the *Media Ownership and Its Impact on Media Independence and Pluralism*⁸ project as starting points (Petković, 2004). I then crosschecked with other sources to make sure that media ownership coding was correct. All the coding refers to the ownership structure in 2007, because that is the year when the Eurobarometer survey (68.1) was conducted.

The next step was to match the ownership data for TV stations with individual level exposure to such media. Namely, the Eurobarometer survey asks respondents the following question: Can you tell me the TV channels, if any, that you regularly watch, meaning at least five times a week? They list a large number of TV outlets, and I created dummy variables that take values of 1 every time a respondent indicated that they watched any state owned media (*State TV*) and any foreign owned media (*Foreign TV*).⁹ I

⁸ Accessed from http://www2.mirovni-institut.si/media_ownership/index.htm, on February 2, 2013.

⁹ The Eurobarometer survey has questions about a number of foreign outlets, such as the CNN, HBO and other, which are foreign but that do not operate within the country as local outlets. Such media were not counted as foreign owned for the purposes of this paper.

also created dummy variables for those that watched state TV only (*State TV only*) and foreign TV only (*Foreign TV only*).

Second, I use items from the ESS survey about the frequency with which people read newspapers and watch television. The questions asked the following: How much of your time watching television is spent watching news or programmes about politics and current affairs? And how much of this [newspaper reading] time is spent reading about politics and current affairs?¹⁰ These two items are measured on a scale from 1-7, going from no time at all (1) to more than 3 hours (7).

Regarding the controls in the multivariate analysis, I have included a set of standard demographic variables including sex, age, size of the community, and income, which other studies have found to be related with political trust and satisfaction with democracy. As for the country-level controls, I have included controls for macroeconomic performance such as GDP growth, unemployment, and GNI per capita (Anderson & Tverdova, 2003). I have also included CPI as a measure of corruption. Finally, since previous research (Ceka, 2013) has shown that political competition matters for political trust, I include a measure for the effective number of parties from the most recent parliamentary elections (*ENP*) (Gallagher, 2012).

For the empirical analysis, I use multi-level models with individuals (1 level) and countries (2 level) in a multivariate framework to test for a number of hypotheses about the impact of media on attitudes.¹¹ This method is appropriate because it accounts for the fact that individuals are clustered within countries. All the results presented from the

¹⁰ These two items had seven categories going from no time at all (1) to more than 3 hours (7).

¹¹ The individual levels are fixed, whereas the country-level effects are random. See Gelman & Hill (2007).

multi-level models are obtained by using maximum-likelihood estimation. I now turn to the discussion of the empirical results.

Results

I present the results of the different analyses in several steps. I begin by examining the overall effect of exposure to news in print and television. Table 2.3 shows the regression results with the factor scores for political trust and macro economic satisfaction as the dependent variables. Two results stand out. First, regardless of the model specification, more time spent reading news in print newspapers is positively and significantly related to both political trust and satisfaction with macro government performance (models 3-6). This effect is very robust and it does not change when exposure to television is controlled for (model 5 and 6). The same cannot be said about exposure to news in television broadcasting, and this is the second main result. The effect for this variable is either statistically insignificant (model 2 and 5) or inconsistent with changing signs (model 1 and 6).

In sum, the results support the hypothesis that only exposure to print media is related to higher political trust and satisfaction with how the government and democracy work. This result is in line with the literature that finds a positive link between exposure to newspapers and increased confidence in the political system (Robinson, 1974; Moy & Pfau, 2000). However, the overall effect of higher TV news consumption on political trust and satisfaction with the political system is not significant. As we will see shortly, the effect of exposure to TV is dependent on media ownership.

From the rest of the individual-level variables, only higher income is consistently and positively related to both trust in and satisfaction with the political system. Males are

less likely to put trust in political institutions than females, as shown by the negative sign on the *Male* variable, but sex does not matter for satisfaction with the macro government performance. The opposite seems to be the case for the age variable. More specifically, older people are less likely to be satisfied with the performance of the system than younger people, but age does not matter for political trust. Higher levels of education are associated with more trust and satisfaction, but this effect is not always significant.

All the coefficients for the country-level variables have the expected signs, but they do not consistently cross conventional thresholds of statistical significance. Citizens from richer countries, as measured by the effect of the logged GNI per capita variable, tend to put more trust in their political institutions and express more satisfaction with the democratic system. The effect of this variable is the most consistent one. Cleaner government with less corruption (higher scores on the *Corruption* variable) is positively related to higher political trust, but this effect is statistically significant only in model 1. Quite interestingly, GDP growth is positively associated with the latent variable measuring macro government satisfaction but not with the one measuring political trust. Finally, as expected, more political competition (*Competition*) is negatively associated with trust and satisfaction, but this effect is statistically significant at the 0.05 level only in model 1.

The main argument of this paper is that ownership of media determines the content and framing used in news reporting and that this has important implications for political attitudes. I now show evidence to support this argument. Figure 2.1 presents data from content analysis of the two most watched TV outlets in ten Eastern European

countries. The data is broken down by content, frame and ownership structure. Table 2.4 lists all the countries and channels used in this analysis.

While the content analysis reveals that the majority of the news reporting has neutral content and a neutral frame, a large proportion of the reports are negative and foreign owned media report far more news with negative content and negative frame. First, Figure 2.1 shows that on average 20% of all news reports in state owned media have a positive frame. This proportion is far lower for foreign owned media. The average number of positively framed reports for the four foreign owned media analyzed in this study is just over 6%. Domestic owned media fall somewhere in between with 13.5%. Moving to the right in Figure 2.1, we see that both foreign and domestic owned private media tend to employ a more negative frame in their news reports than state media do. But, most strikingly, the news reports with negative content *and* negative framing are far more likely to be transmitted in foreign owned TV channels. While news with negative content and frame make up only about 5% of the total reporting for state media, foreign owned ones report more than three times as many negative news with a negative frame (16.5%). Again, domestic owned private media fall in between.

The results presented in Udovičić (2007) do not consistently break down the reporting based on issues. But, the country report for Hungary offers more detailed data on coverage for a variety of issues including the Hungarian parliament, party politics, as well as crime, scandals, and disaster (Bajomi-Lázár & Monori, 2007). As Figure 2.2 shows, the differences in reporting between the state owned MTV and the foreign owned RTL TV channel are quite fascinating. Over 60% of the RTL TV news articles were on crime, scandals, and disaster, two-thirds of which had negative content. Another 12%

were on the Hungarian parliament and party politics, more than half of which had negative content. In contrast, for the state-owned MTV only 37% of the news reports were on crime, scandals, and disasters, of which less than half had negative content. Furthermore, reporting on the Hungarian parliament and party politics comprised 22% of total reporting for this state channel, only a third of which were coded as having negative content. It is important to note that framing was also more negative for the foreign owned outlet across both categories of news (i.e. societal ills and politics). In a nutshell, the largest foreign TV in Hungary allocates an overwhelming section of its news programme to reports about crime, scandals and disaster. The content and framing of the reports are far more negative than that of the state TV.

The news reports analyzed above are on issues that are most likely to affect public attitudes towards the political system and its performance. I now present evidence from regression analysis showing that stark differences in content and tone of reporting as a result of ownership matter for public opinion. First, Table 2.5 presents the results from a multi-level logistic regression analysis with perceptions of crime as the dependent variable¹². Exposure to state owned TV is associated with a lower probability of indicating that crime is an important issue while exposure to foreign owned TV is associated with an increased probability of seeing crime as an issue. Older people and, unsurprisingly, people living in larger cities tend to be more concerned about crime. Those who are more satisfied with the national economy are also more likely to be concerned with this issue. None of the country-level variables is statistically significant.

¹² Specifically, the Eurobarometer survey asked the respondents: What do you think are the two most important issues facing (OUR COUNTRY) at the moment? A dichotomous variable was created taken a value of 1 for every respondent that listed crime as one of the two most important issues.

These results suggest that exposure to foreign media, which tends to specialize in scandalization and negative coverage, does in fact prime people to view crime as an important societal ill. The opposite is the case for state owned media because the content and framing of news is far less negative than in foreign owned media.

The more important question is whether ownership of media matters for political trust and satisfaction with the democratic system. Table 2.6 presents regressions results, which strongly suggest that it does. As can be seen from model 1 and 2, regular exposure to state owned TV (*State TV*) is related to both more political trust and higher satisfaction with democracy. This effect is highly statistically significant. The effect of regularly watching foreign owned TV is statistically insignificant when we control for exposure to state TV. Exposure to foreign TV tends to depress political trust and satisfaction with democracy only in cases where foreign outlets are the main source of news as measured by the effect of the variable *Foreign TV only* in model 3 and 4. In other words, individuals that rely primarily on foreign owned media for news (i.e. watch them at least five times a week but do not spend as much time watching state TV) are less trustful of political institutions and express lower levels of satisfaction with the political system as a whole.

The results suggest a complex reality of multiple sources of media influence the effects of which are difficult to isolate, which is not all that surprising. When individuals spend significant amounts of time watching state and foreign media, the more positive coverage and tone of the reporting in state TV seems to neutralize the effect of the negative reporting in foreign owned media. But, more interestingly,

about a fifth of all respondents indicate that they watch foreign owned TV at least five times a week but that they do not spend as much time watching state TV. On average, and controlling for other variables, these people have lower political trust and are less satisfied with how democracy works.

One could argue that, because of personal characteristics, people who watch foreign outlets are drawn to more sensational news and hold the political system in lower regard to begin with. It is quite likely that certain types of people are more likely to seek out television programs that confirm their beliefs and biases about crime, scandals, and political corruptions. This is fair criticism of findings about the effect of media on public opinion coming from survey designs more generally (Norris, 2000). Two things can be said in response to this criticism. First, I do not argue that people are tabula rasa with no preconceptions and beliefs. In fact, the theoretical framework explicitly enlists the complex set of knowledge and biases to explain how negative framing of news causes disaffection. Exposure to the different types of media makes certain issues salient while depressing others (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997:59).

Second, and more importantly, we already know from lab experiments that *ceteris paribus* exposure to material that suggests political corruption decreases political efficacy regardless of the preexisting beliefs (Robinson, 1976). The crucial step in my analysis has been to show that the content and tone of state owned media is far more positive than the content and tone of foreign owned media. The content analysis strongly supports this preposition. Thus, given the evidence from the content analysis and the fact that exposure to negative coverage and tone has been found to decrease political efficacy and trust in

experimental designs, the effects we observe for exposure to state and foreign media are to be expected.

To return to the regression results of table 2.6, more satisfaction with the national economy is related to high political trust and more satisfaction with democracy, and this effect is robust to different model specifications. The coefficients for the rest of the control variables are broadly consistent with those of table 2.3. From the country level variables, less corruption in a country is associated with more political trust (*Corruption*). Similarly, more political competition is associated with less political trust (model 1 and 3), confirming findings from earlier work (Ceka, 2013). The effect of these two variables is not significant in the models with satisfaction with democracy as the dependent variable (model 2 and 4). Finally, the macroeconomic variables do not have consistent effects, and unemployment and GNI per capita have the opposite signs of what we would expect.

Conclusion

The conceptual framework through which media evolution in Eastern Europe has been analyzed derives from the Western-centric and normatively motivated understanding of media as guardians of free speech and defenders of the public interests vis-à-vis the state. By focusing on media as guarantors of personal freedoms, and clean government (i.e. watchdog media), analysts have failed to investigate a host of fascinating trends that do not fall neatly in this normative framework (Jiráček & Köpplöová, 2013). For example, nominally free and independent media outlets might be little more than platforms for advancing the tight economic interests of the owners (i.e. moguls) through selling of coverage time to both political and business interests. Similarly, the

entrance of multinational media conglomerates in the local markets of Eastern Europe has been understudied because it has been seen as a sign of progress. In this sense, in an overly simplistic analysis most have assumed that increasingly free media would contribute to the consolidation of democracy.

This paper has painted a more nuanced picture about media more generally, and the exposure to foreign media more specifically. The analysis has shown that the content and framing of news differs markedly between state owned and foreign media. The more negative coverage and framing in foreign media have the effect of depressing political trust and satisfaction with the system. However, the results show that this is the case only if foreign media are the predominant source of news for people. In contrast, more exposure to state owned media decreases the likelihood of political distrust and negative evaluations of the political system. So, are we better off with only government controlled state-run TV, as was the case under communism? No, of course not, but this article shows that the picture is more complicated and simply assuming that more media freedom leads to better democratic outcomes is not warranted.

Tables and figures

Table 2.1. THE MEDIA SYSTEMS OF CEE

	<i>Development of the press</i>	<i>Political Parallelism</i>	<i>Professionalism</i>	<i>State Intervention</i>
Bulgaria	Low	High	Low	High
Estonia	High	Low	Low	Low
Czech Rep.	Low	High	Low	High
Hungary	Low	High	Low	High
Latvia	Low	High	Low	High
Lithuania	Low	Medium	Low	High
Poland	High	High	Medium	High
Romania	Low	High	Low	High
Slovakia	Low	High	Low	High
Slovenia	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium

Note: The table was constructed using information from country reports that were produced by researchers from the Media and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe (MDCEE) project at Oxford University. The evaluations, which are based on extensive case studies and interview data, are presented in the appendixes of the country reports and are directly based off Hallin & Mancini's (2004) four dimensions presented in this table.

Table 2.2. MEDIA CONSUMPTION IN EAST AND WEST

	News in Newspapers (% at least 0.5 hour)	News in TV (% at least 0.5 hour)
Slovenia	11	48
Poland	12	55
Hungary	13	41
Slovakia	16	62
Great Britain	16	57
Russia	17	53
Czech Republic	17	52
Lithuania	17	48
Croatia	18	51
Ukraine	18	50
Portugal	21	67
Spain	22	54
France	22	67
Germany	22	52
Estonia	26	74
Sweden	27	61
Bulgaria	28	71
Belgium	30	62
Denmark	31	75
Finland	31	65
Netherlands	33	70
Greece	34	54
Mediterranean	26	58
Western Europe	26	64
Eastern Europe	17	55

SOURCE: ESS Round 5

Table 2.3. MULTILEVEL MAXIMUM LIKELIHOOD ESTIMATES OF
POLITICAL ATTITUDES

		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
VARIABLES		Political Trust	Macro Gov. Satisfaction	Political Trust	Macro Gov. Satisfaction	Political Trust	Macro Gov. Satisfaction
<i>Individual Level Variables</i>	Newspapers			0.050*** (0.011)	0.035** (0.011)	0.056*** (0.011)	0.049*** (0.011)
	Television	0.014* (0.006)	0.000 (0.006)			-0.006 (0.007)	-0.017* (0.007)
	Male	-0.069*** (0.014)	-0.017 (0.014)	-0.068*** (0.017)	-0.006 (0.017)	-0.068*** (0.017)	-0.003 (0.017)
	Age	0.000 (0.000)	-0.001* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.002*** (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.002** (0.001)
	Education	0.005* (0.002)	0.005* (0.002)	0.005 (0.003)	0.006* (0.003)	0.005 (0.003)	0.007* (0.003)
	Income	0.020*** (0.003)	0.033*** (0.003)	0.023*** (0.003)	0.030*** (0.003)	0.023*** (0.003)	0.029*** (0.003)
	Corruption (CPI)	0.125* (0.058)	0.033 (0.062)	0.117 (0.061)	0.036 (0.062)	0.117 (0.061)	0.037 (0.062)
	GDP Growth (%)	0.046 (0.030)	0.066* (0.032)	0.042 (0.032)	0.069* (0.032)	0.043 (0.032)	0.071* (0.032)
<i>Country Level Variables</i>	Log GNI/PC	0.406* (0.197)	0.398 (0.211)	0.442* (0.208)	0.428* (0.212)	0.440* (0.208)	0.417* (0.211)
	Competition	-0.119* (0.056)	-0.098 (0.060)	-0.113 (0.059)	-0.092 (0.060)	-0.115 (0.059)	-0.093 (0.060)
	Constant	-4.328* (1.835)	-3.978* (1.973)	-4.650* (1.940)	-4.308* (1.976)	-4.619* (1.937)	-4.203* (1.970)
	sigma_u	0.170***	0.183***	0.179***	0.182***	0.179***	0.182***
	sigma_e	0.832***	0.810***	0.819***	0.802***	0.818***	0.800***
Observations		14,512	14,131	9,854	9,666	9,565	9,393
Countries		11	11	11	11	11	11
Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05							
SOURCE: ESS5							

Table 2.4. THE TV CHANNELS INCLUDED IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS BY COUNTRY AND OWNERSHIP

Country	Public service TV	Private service TV	
	Channel	Channel	Ownership
Albania	TVSH	Top Channel	Domestic
Bosnia	BHT	NTV Hayat	Domestic
Bulgaria	BNT	bTV	Foreign
Croatia	HTV	Nova TV	Foreign
Hungary	MTV	RTL Klub	Foreign
Macedonia	MTV	A1	Domestic
Moldova	Moldova 1	TV7	Domestic
Montenegro	TVCG	TV IN	Domestic
Romania	TVR1	Antena 1	Domestic
Serbia	RTS	B92	Foreign
SOURCE: Udovičić (2007)			

Table 2.5. MULTILEVEL MAXIMUM LIKELIHOOD ESTIMATES OF PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME

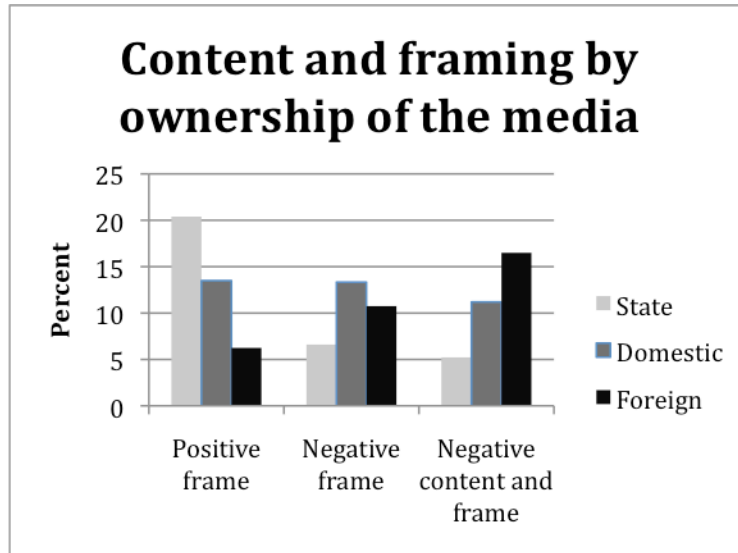
VARIABLES		Crime	
		Coeff.	SE
<i>Individual Level Variables</i>	State TV	-0.113*	(0.052)
	Foreign TV	0.201**	(0.062)
	Econ. Situation	0.107***	(0.032)
	Education	-0.008	(0.009)
	Male	-0.002	(0.045)
	Age	0.065***	(0.015)
	Size of comm.	0.071*	(0.028)
<i>Country Level Variables</i>	Corruption (CPI)	-0.054	(0.243)
	GDP Growth (%)	0.027	(0.050)
	Unemployment	0.004	(0.027)
	Log GNI/PC	0.779	(0.434)
	Competition	0.934	(0.885)
	Constant	-11.894	(8.188)
Observations		11,540	
Countries		12	
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05			
SOURCE: Eurobarometer 68.1			

Table 2.6. MULTILEVEL MAXIMUM LIKELIHOOD ESTIMATES OF POLITICAL ATTITUDES

		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
		Political		Political	
VARIABLES		Trust	Dem. Sat.	Trust	Dem. Sat.
<i>Individual Level Variables</i>	Foreign TV	-0.009 (0.019)	0.019 (0.058)		
	Foreign TV only			-0.038* (0.019)	-0.117* (0.058)
	State TV	0.056*** (0.017)	0.163*** (0.050)		
	Econ. Situation	0.290*** (0.010)	0.982*** (0.033)	0.291*** (0.010)	0.987*** (0.033)
	Education	0.004 (0.003)	0.025** (0.009)	0.004 (0.003)	0.026** (0.009)
	Male	-0.052*** (0.014)	0.025 (0.042)	-0.053*** (0.014)	0.021 (0.042)
	Age	-0.008 (0.005)	-0.080*** (0.014)	-0.006 (0.005)	-0.074*** (0.014)
	Size of comm.	-0.006 (0.009)	0.067* (0.027)	-0.008 (0.009)	0.062* (0.027)
	Corruption (CPI)	0.292*** (0.055)	0.097 (0.212)	0.289*** (0.055)	0.081 (0.206)
	GDP Growth (%)	0.028 (0.019)	-0.011 (0.073)	0.028 (0.019)	-0.014 (0.071)
<i>Country Level Variables</i>	Unemployment	0.003 (0.004)	0.043** (0.016)	0.002 (0.004)	0.040* (0.016)
	Log GNI/PC	-0.668*** (0.189)	0.126 (0.733)	-0.654*** (0.189)	0.186 (0.713)
	Competition	-0.156** (0.049)	-0.002 (0.189)	-0.158** (0.049)	-0.001 (0.184)
	Constant	4.918** (1.701)	-4.729 (6.578)	4.835** (1.694)	-5.086 (6.404)
	sigma_u	0.084***		0.084***	
	sigma_e	0.698***		0.698***	
	Observations	9,863	11,188	9,863	11,188
	Countries	12	12	12	12

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05
SOURCE: Eurobarometer 68.1

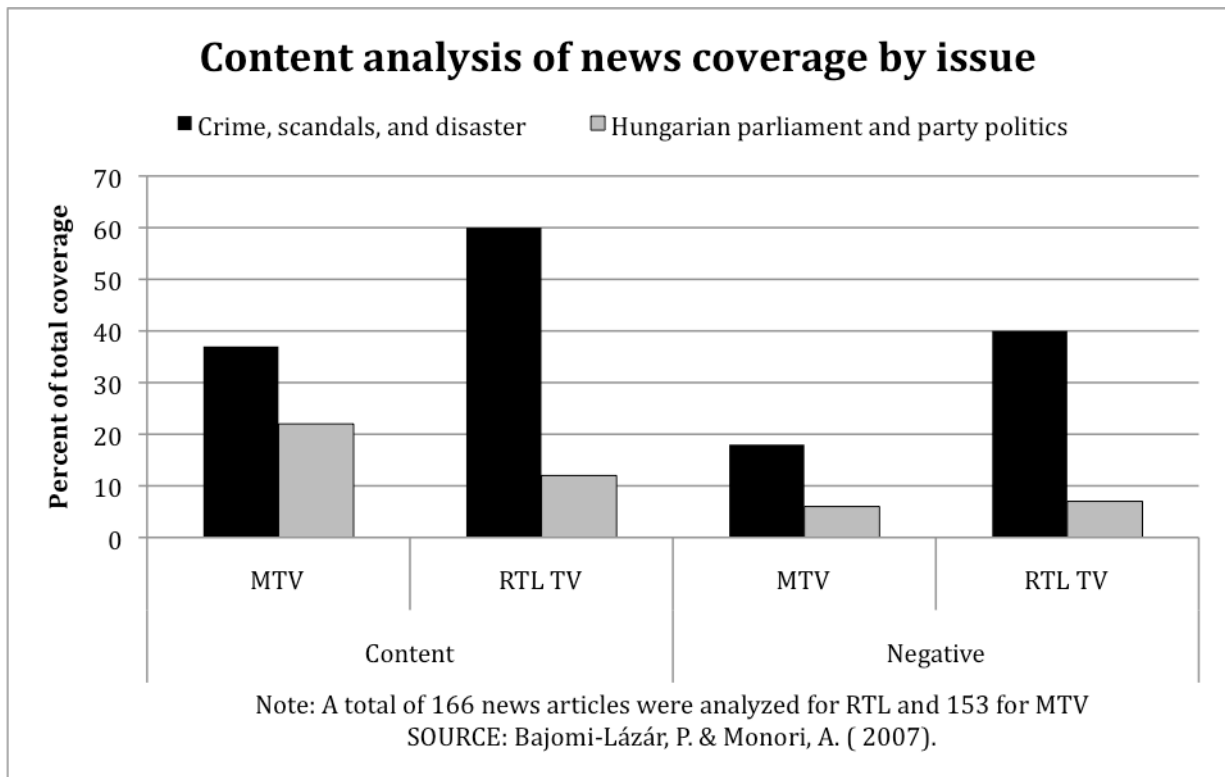
Figure 2.1.



Note: Figure 2.1 was constructed using information from country reports that were produced by Media Plan Institute - Sarajevo with partner organizations: Albanian Media Institute, Albania; Center for Independent Journalism, Hungary; Center for Independent Journalism, Romania; Independent Journalism Center, Moldova; International Center for Education of Journalists, Croatia; Macedonian Institute for Media, Macedonia; Media Development Center, Bulgaria; Montenegro Media Institute, Montenegro; Novi Sad School of Journalism, Serbia.

SOURCE: Udovičić (2007)

Figure 2.2



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Democratic Satisfaction and Support for non-mainstream Parties in Eastern Europe

One of the most consistent findings from the literature on political attitudes in the post-communist world is the high level of distrust of and dissatisfaction with the main institutions of democracy (Rose, 2009; Pop-Eleches & Tucker, 2011). Political parties have fared the worst: The overwhelming majority of East Europeans expresses little or no trust in parties, and considers their leaders to be self-serving.

This dissatisfaction with parties and their leaders has led to a general dissatisfaction with democracy, with troubling implications for political participation and electoral behavior. The existing literature has shown that dissatisfaction with democracy breeds apathy, which leads to lower voter turnout. Dissatisfied voters are also less likely to spend time working for parties, further hampering the grassroots support for parties and undermining their legitimacy (Ceka, 2013).

Not all dissatisfied or disillusioned citizens, however, are hopelessly apathetic. Dissatisfaction can outrage voters and spur them to mobilize for opposition parties. The extent to which dissatisfied voters can be mobilized to vote instead of withdrawing completely from the political process is an empirical question that has received little attention in the context of Eastern Europe. Even more important and equally understudied is the electoral behavior of these citizens: What kinds of parties are able to tap into this reservoir of discontent? Are mainstream opposition parties able to mobilize these dissatisfied voters, or do they opt for non-mainstream parties instead? The existing

research has relied primarily on aggregate data from electoral results, and has assumed that the protest vote of the dissatisfied citizens is to be blamed for the lack of consolidation of party systems in Eastern Europe (e.g. Pop-Eleches, 2010). However, no study has systematically examined the electoral behavior of disillusioned voters in this region, despite their relative proportion and electoral potential.

This article seeks to illuminate the electoral behavior of Eastern Europe's dissatisfied citizens.¹ I am particularly interested in studying the effects that dissatisfaction with the way democracy is working has on support for non-mainstream parties.² Through an analysis of 80 Eurobarometer surveys conducted between 1992 and 2004 in 10 Eastern European Countries, and six surveys from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) conducted between 2005 and 2011, I show that initially the dissatisfied voters were more likely to support the largest mainstream opposition parties. This result is puzzling because research from Western Europe has consistently shown that dissatisfied voters support extreme parties and not mainstream ones. The early period of the transition from communism helps explain this unusual voting behavior. Once the first generation of elections were held, the dissatisfied voters had at least one mainstream opposition party that had not been in power for whom to vote. Regardless of whether they were reformed communist parties or newly created parties, voters flocked to these opposition parties hoping for better living standards and protection from the precarious transition.

¹ I use the term dissatisfied citizens to mean citizens who say that they are not satisfied with the actual way democracy works in their country.

² Different authors have used different names for such parties. Niche parties, anti-establishment parties, anti-mainstream parties and unorthodox parties have all been used before. I call them non-mainstream parties because, although they might not have much in common, they share one key characteristic—they are distinctly not mainstream parties.

However, once mainstream parties of different stripes had been tried, dissatisfied voters lost faith in mainstream options and turned to non-mainstream parties. From these parties, extreme nationalist and radical left parties have been far more likely to benefit from the dissatisfied vote than more moderate non-mainstream ones. Furthermore, I demonstrate that this gain for the more extreme or radical parties was at the expense of moderate non-mainstream ones because they compete for the support of the same group of dissatisfied voters. Data from more recent elections suggests that the voting behavior of dissatisfied citizens in Eastern Europe has “normalized” in the sense that it now resembles the voting behavior of dissatisfied West Europeans, who tend to support more extreme parties. Finally, I show that dissatisfaction with democracy is still more likely to result in abstention from the electoral process than in a vote for any party. I should note that I am not arguing that voters in Eastern Europe are electing progressively more extreme parties. The argument I am making is that *dissatisfied* voters are most likely not to vote—but if they do vote they favor more extreme non-mainstream parties.

This paper utilizes a large number of surveys from different sources to show the time-dependent voting dynamics in post-communist Europe. It makes an empirical contribution to the literature that examines the electoral consequences of political attitudes, and especially to the literature on satisfaction with democracy. The theoretical framework and the findings of this paper also speak to a growing literature that studies voting patterns in countries that are transitioning away from authoritarianism and addresses concerns about the potential rise of anti-system parties in the early rounds of elections. The findings here suggest that scholars and policy-makers should not worry too much about the unpredictability of the elections at the beginning of the transition because

voters did not seem to immediately turn to extreme parties. This insight might be particularly appropriate for the countries swept by the Arab Spring, where free and fair elections are taking place for the first time in decades. In fact, although factions related to the Muslim Brotherhood have won elections in Egypt and Tunisia, they are centrist and far more moderate than the Salafists and other radical groups that many feared might end up dominating these societies (The Economist, 2012, February 18).

The rest of this article is organized in four sections. First, I discuss the relevant literature in comparative politics that deals with satisfaction with and support for democracy and its institutions as well as with the emergence of non-mainstream parties in Eastern Europe. Second, I sketch the theoretical framework and highlight the main hypotheses to be tested. Third, I discuss the data sources and the measures that I use for the main variables of interest, and describe the methods used. Fourth I discuss the findings. The final section concludes with the implications of my findings.

1. Dissatisfied citizens and non-mainstream parties

1.1 Satisfaction with democracy

What is the link between satisfaction with how democracy works and voting behavior? Do attitudes about the performance of the democratic system matter for electoral outcomes? In this section I explore how evaluations of the performance of democracy affect voting behavior.

It has become a truism in our field that, for democracies to be stable, citizens need to support the regime and that satisfaction with how democracy works creates a reserve of goodwill among citizens that is central to a well-functioning polity (Almond & Verba, 1963). Even more importantly, research suggests that dissatisfaction with democracy

undergirds much of the support for extreme right parties in Western Europe (Arzheimer, 2009). How much support does democracy enjoy in Europe? Research from both Eastern and Western Europe strongly suggests that support for democracy is deeply established and that, even in the newer democracies of Eastern Europe, very few people support any other form of government (Klingemann, 1999; Fuchs, Guidorossi & Svensson, 1995).

However, as Robert Dahl (1998) reminds us, it is important to make a distinction between support for the ideal of democracy and evaluations of how it performs in any given context. Thus, while the overwhelming majority of Europeans support democracy as a system, a large number of them, especially in Eastern Europe, are dissatisfied with how it works in practice. To a great extent, this dissatisfaction stems from the unrealistic expectations that East Europeans had about their personal circumstances once communism collapsed. The economic policies adopted by successive governments after 1989 caused much hardship and failed to live up to the expectation of the citizens. This widespread disappointment with the outcomes of the transition, especially in the early years, led to a prevalent dissatisfaction with the working of democracy.

The causes of satisfaction with democracy have been extensively studied (see Tóka 1995; Waldron-Moore, 1999; and Schäfer, 2012). In contrast, we know little about its consequences for voting behavior, especially in Eastern Europe. But why should we care about whether people are satisfied or not with the way democracy works? It is clear that the Europe of today is not a breeding ground for anti-democratic sentiment, and, with few exceptions, democracy has never been more consolidated in the countries of the EU. As it turns out, however, there are many good reasons to care about the causes and, perhaps more importantly, the consequences of satisfaction with democracy. For

example, dissatisfied citizens have consistently outnumbered satisfied citizens in Eastern Europe for much of the 1990s, so their electoral potential is enormous (See Figure 3.1). The dissatisfaction we see in Figure 3.1 could be due to poor economic conditions, a perceived lack of opportunities and high levels corruption, or some other grievance. Whatever the root cause, this paper shows that such dissatisfaction it is likely to result in either a withdrawal from the process or in a protest vote.

One of the very few strands of literature that has systematically dealt with satisfaction with democracy is the literature on the extreme right in Western Europe. For example, Arzheimer (2009) finds that dissatisfaction with democracy in 13 Western European states is significantly related to support for extreme right parties, with the substantive effect being very large. Other studies report similar findings as well (see e.g. Knigge, 1998).

It is thus surprising that no study has systematically considered the electoral behavior of dissatisfied East Europeans, despite the fact that the number of dissatisfied citizens is much higher in this region than in Western Europe (Schäfer, 2012). The main focus of this paper is on the non-mainstream parties because, for theoretical reasons, they are the most likely beneficiaries of higher levels of dissatisfaction with democracy. Do such parties manage to capitalize on this large pool of dissatisfied democrats in Eastern Europe and what is the ideological profile of these kinds of parties?

1.2 Non-mainstream parties

In order to study the electoral behavior of dissatisfied citizens, we need to categorize non-mainstream parties. This exercise is particularly challenging in the electoral arena of Eastern Europe, where parties often change labels between elections, or

enter in pre-electoral coalitions. The electoral systems of Eastern Europe are characterized by a constant entry and exit of parties from electoral competition, which has hindered the development of stable party systems (e.g. Rose, 2009; Haughton 2003; Haughton & Rybář 2008). This volatility has resulted in serious discontinuity in the supply of parties.³ From the 155 parties that have contested elections in the region between 1990 and 2007, only 19 parties have competed in all the elections!

Fortunately, Pop-Eleches (2010) in his excellent study of support for non-mainstream or, as he calls them, unorthodox parties in Eastern Europe has simplified this task by conceptualizing and classifying four different kinds of non-mainstream parties. Since I rely on his typology, I need to discuss the four types of non-mainstream, or, as he calls them, “unorthodox” parties (UOPs) and how they are coded in some detail.

In more general terms, Pop-Eleches defines UOPs based on what they are not—mainstream parties. The yardstick he uses to determine whether a given party is mainstream or not is the ideological spectrum of Western European democracies. He argues that this is warranted because the Western model provided a reference point for the East European parties once communism fell, and because many parties from the East tried hard to fit themselves in the established party families of the West. The actual typology of parties relies on three dimensions: economic policy orientation (anticapitalist vs. procapitalist), reliance on ethnonationalist appeals (nonethnic appeals vs. extreme nationalism), and the relative prominence of individual leaders (ideology/platform driven vs. nonideological/personality driven).

³ The Czech Republic has had low levels of volatility, and thus is an important exception (Deegan-Krause & Haughton, 2010).

So, based on where an individual party falls on these three dimensions, it is coded as (1) radical left, (2) extreme nationalist, (3) nationalist populist, and (4) new/centrist populist. As for the ideological underpinnings of the four types of parties, the radical left is composed of mostly unreformed Communist parties such as Czech and Moravian Communist Party (KSCM) and the Romanian Socialist Labor Party (PSM), which run on anticapitalist sentiments and a return to the good days of communism. The extreme nationalist camp is composed of parties such as Bulgaria's Ataka, Romania's PRM, and the Hungarian Life and Justice Party (MIEP), which rely on virulent nationalism and, oftentimes, anti-Semitism. National populist parties share a penchant for using nationalism with the extreme nationalist parties—but rely less on virulent nationalism and tend to focus their agenda on specific groups such as farmers (e.g. Hungary's Smallholders (FKGP)) or religious conservatives (e.g. Poland's League of Polish Families (LPR)). Finally, new/centrist-populist parties are characterized by dominating leaders who, as Pop-Eleches (2010: 231) puts it, tend to circumvent ideology “by claiming to be nonideological antipolitical formations.” Such parties adopt moderate positions on key issues such as the European integration and capitalism. The most famous cases of such parties include the Bulgarian National Movement Simeon II (NDSV), the Lithuanian Liberal Union (LLS) of former Prime Minister Rolandas Paksas, and Robert Fico's Direction-Social Democracy (SMER) in Slovakia. See Table 3.1 for an overview of all non-mainstream parties in the ten Eastern European countries included in the analysis.

What does the existing literature say about the determinants of support for non-mainstream parties in Europe? There are two general observations that can be made about

this literature. First, most of the existing work examines support for extreme right parties in Western Europe. As Arzheimer (2009: 259) notes, “Research on the voters of the extreme right in Western Europe has become a minor industry.” Second, there is very little comparative work done on non-mainstream parties in Eastern Europe (Mudde, 2007). Most of the existing studies focus on extreme right parties and, with the exception of important cases studies, little work has been done on the determinants of support for other non-mainstream parties.

First, let’s look at the debate about the role of contextual factors and individual voter motivations for the rise of extreme right parties in Western Europe. Kitschelt (1996), for example, argues that the success of such parties hinges upon the convergence of moderately left and right parties towards the position of the median voter. This, he argues, leaves a void in the ideological spectrum that extreme parties, especially extreme right ones, manage to fill. This line of reasoning falls under the “political opportunity structure” approach, and other studies employing it have emphasized the importance of institutional variables such as electoral rules (e.g. PR systems) and the disproportionality of electoral outcomes for the rise of extreme parties. Macroeconomic conditions have featured heavily in the research on support for the extreme right but also for non-mainstream parties more generally (Pop-Eleches, 2010). Poor economic conditions, measured through higher unemployment, inflation, income inequality and lower growth, should be associated with higher support for non-mainstream parties. I therefore control for the effect of all these economic variables in the regression analyses.

Others have highlighted the importance of individual factors, including political trust (Eatwell, 2000) and anti-EU attitudes (Arzheimer, 2009) for the success of extreme

right parties. Although different studies focus on different enabling factors, as Arzheimer & Carter (2006: 422) have suggested, “the majority of studies agree that fixed or permanent institutional features combine with more short-term, volatile or conjectural factors to produce an overall particular opportunity structure”.

Research on the extreme right in Eastern Europe has suggested that anti-establishment sentiments and the convergence of positions among mainstream parties are partly to blame for the successes of the extreme right. Bustikova (2009:236), for example, finds that corruption and lack of accountability coupled, “with the convergence of the major moderate parties on key issues, creates an environment conducive for the success of the extreme right.” The convergence of the mainstream parties was largely caused by the ‘vacuum effect’ of the EU accession project, where EU conditionality forced governing parties to adopt more liberal positions on a number of issues. Thus, in the post-accession period, we see an emergence of parties advocating anti-liberal policies (O’Dwyer & Schwartz, 2009).

As for the micro-level determinants of support for extreme right parties, the literature has provided mixed results. On the one hand, scholars have found that lower-income people, working class people and those who live in rural areas are more likely to support extreme right parties (Minkenberg, 2002). In short, it is the losers of the transition that tend to support such parties. On the other hand, support for some extreme right parties, or according to Pop-Eleches’s (2010) typology extreme nationalist parties, (e.g. Romani’s PRM and the Hungarian Life and Justice Party) comes from more affluent and younger voters (Karsai, 1999). Therefore, in the main analysis, I include

demographic controls for age, sex, education, and financial outlook or income bracket to identify the demographic profile of the different non-mainstream parties.

Studying the structural and individual factors that determine support for extreme right parties has been very fruitful and has produced a large body of work. This research is partly motivated by a normative consideration about the undesirability of the extreme right in Europe, which has been the hallmark of xenophobia and intolerance. However, this narrow focus has sidetracked scholars from investigating the factors that enable the emergence of non-mainstream parties more generally. Some of the most interesting examples of such parties entering the scene come from Eastern Europe. Bulgaria's National Movement Simeon II (NDSV) and Slovakia's SMER are non-mainstream parties, but neither of them is extreme right—they are both new centrist/populist parties. Thus, it is important to expand our analytical scope to include the relevant factors that produce a “political opportunity structure” for the emergence of any non-mainstream party.

As already discussed, Pop-Eleches (2010) has made a contribution to this literature by developing a novel typology of non-mainstream parties and providing an account for their success. He shows that non-mainstream parties have been in the rise in Eastern Europe in the third generation of postcommunist elections as disenchanted voters have run out of mainstream parties to vote for (Pop-Eleches, 2010). As he puts it, “Whereas in first- and second-generation elections the anti-incumbent bias of East European voters generally benefited mainstream opponents and thereby contributed to healthy power alternation, in third-generation elections (i.e., elections occurring after two

or more distinct political camps have governed in the postcommunist period) voter disaffection with incumbents starts to benefit unorthodox parties.”

Implicit in this argument is the idea that the protest vote drives these electoral trends in Eastern Europe. However, the author does not provide a direct test of whether it is the protest vote that is actually driving the electoral outcomes. This is simply assumed. The main analysis does not include individual variables that tap into the attitudes of protest voters.⁴ We would expect that some non-mainstream parties benefit electorally more than others from dissatisfaction with democracy, and they do so at the expense of other non-mainstream parties – and, indeed, my results clearly show that this is the case.

Another limitation of Pop-Eleches’s (2010) study is that it focuses on election outcomes, and does not examine support for non-mainstream parties between elections. Speaking about a similar limitation of studies on the extreme right in Western Europe, Arzheimer (2009:261) notes that, “while election results are decisive for the creation, composition, and survival of governments, the ongoing level of support for the ER can have a tremendous impact on proposed and actually implemented policy via the strategic calculations of the established parties, even if the ER is not (yet) represented in parliament.” For that reason, it is important to move beyond the electoral results and examine the more sustained support for non-mainstream parties between elections as well.

Finally, aggregate level analysis of electoral support cannot account for the psychological processes that underlie different types of electoral behavior, because such

⁴ To be fair, the author conducts some preliminary analysis of survey data that suggest that voters without party ID, voters who do not believe that it matters who is in power, and those who are not satisfied with how democracy works (i.e. attitudes of likely protest voters) were more likely to vote for non-mainstream parties in third generation than in second generation elections. But, the author does not provide a detailed analysis of the types of non-mainstream parties that benefited from dissatisfied voters.

processes are observed at the individual level. Most of the studies employing aggregate level analysis have to assume the presence of such processes without being able to explicitly test them. The multilevel modeling approach that I adopt in this paper has the advantage of allowing us to jointly model the individual level sociodemographic and attitudinal effects and the country level or contextual effects.

Having discussed the main concepts of interest (i.e. satisfaction with the working of democracy and non-mainstream parties), I now lay out the theoretical framework used in this paper.

2. Theoretical framework

My theoretical framework draws on the existing literature and provides a more complete account of the behavior of the dissatisfied democrats. The focus is on this group, because for most of the 1990s, it comprised the majority of the survey respondents. The main question I ask is the following one: what kinds of parties do the dissatisfied democrats in Eastern Europe support? Furthermore, is it the case that such voters simply withdraw from the political system or are some parties able to mobilize them? I make three main arguments. First, I argue that the extreme nationalist and radical left parties are far more likely to benefit from the dissatisfied group than the other two types of non-mainstream parties. In line with Pop-Eleches's (2010) findings, this effect is only observed in the period roughly corresponding to the third-generation elections. Second, I argue that the gain for the more extreme or radical parties was done at the expense of moderate non-mainstream parties (i.e. national populist and new/centrist populist parties) because they compete for the support of the same group of dissatisfied

voters. Third, I argue that dissatisfaction with democracy is most likely to result in abstention from the electoral process.

Let's begin by considering three possible types of electoral behavior. First, dissatisfied democrats might abstain from voting. If they are unhappy with economic outcomes or are convinced that the existing parties are self-serving and corrupt, they might simply stay home on Election Day or otherwise refuse to participate in the electoral process⁵. Research has shown that the losers of the reforms in Eastern Europe, who are likely to be dissatisfied with democracy, have tended to abstain from voting (Greskovits, 2007). I expect dissatisfaction with how democracy is working to be most strongly associated with this type of behavior. Second, dissatisfied democrats might dislike the ruling elites and the parties they run, but they might still support them. This could be, for example, due to deeply embedded clientelistic networks linking ruling parties and their clients. For obvious reasons, this type of behavior is unlikely to emerge because the more dissatisfied one is with the ruling elites the more likely she is to either abstain or vote for political alternatives.

Third, dissatisfied voters who decide to participate in the process will tend to support opposition parties. Regardless of the source of dissatisfaction, opposition parties are likely to capitalize on the discontent of the electorate and convince at least some of them to vote. That said, it is not immediately clear which opposition parties stand to benefit from this situation. Are mainstream opposition parties likely to tap into the dissatisfaction or is it the case that non-mainstream parties, which run on anti-

⁵ For example, more determined voters might show up on Election Day and destroy the ballot.

establishment and extreme positions, are better positioned to benefit from such dissatisfaction?

The extant literature provides some guidelines about what electoral behavior we should expect and under what circumstances. Here I build on Pop-Eleches's (2010) insight that the mainstream opposition parties were the most likely beneficiaries of the initial protest vote in Eastern Europe. In other words, in the second-generation elections, which followed the first free and democratic elections after the fall of communism in the early 1990s, mainstream opposition parties received the vote of the dissatisfied citizens. Again, this puzzling voting behavior can be explained by the fact that in every country studied here there was a mainstream opposition party or camp that could legitimately claim to be anti-establishment because it had no previous stints in government. Such claims seem to have worked because the anti-incumbency bias benefited mainstream opposition parties and not extreme ones. But, what parties, if any, did dissatisfied citizens support after the second generation-elections were completed and the mainstream alternatives had been tried? It is important to answer this question because the share of the dissatisfied democrats continued to comprise the majority of the survey respondents throughout the 2000s.

The main argument I make about the third-generation elections is that some but not all types of non-mainstream parties were able to tap into the discontent of the dissatisfied citizens. To be more precise, I argue that parties with more extreme or radical positions (i.e. radical left and extreme nationalist parties) were more successful in garnering the support dissatisfied citizens for at least two related reasons. For one thing, the new/centrist and the national populist parties tend to be more moderate than the

radical left and extreme nationalist parties, and thus less likely to galvanize the anger or outrage of the dissatisfied democrats. Second, as the directional theory of voting suggests, voters prefer candidates or parties that are decisively ‘on their side’ of the ideological spectrum to parties that are more centrist (Rabinowitz & Macdonald, 1989). In the context of Eastern Europe, dissatisfied democrats who are prone to nationalistic appeals will prefer extreme nationalist parties to the more moderate national populist parties that also rely on nationalism.

Furthermore, extreme parties managed to gain support at the expense of other, moderate non-mainstream parties. The logic is the following: non-mainstream parties compete for the support of dissatisfied citizens. Such citizens are rightly seen by all stripes of non-mainstream parties as being up for grabs, because they tend to have weak party identification and because their dissatisfaction and anger is politically exploitable. However, this competition for the dissatisfied voter is a zero-sum game, with gains in support for one or more non-mainstream party translating in loss in support for other such parties. Vachudova’s (2008) finding that after EU accession, a gain for some non-mainstream parties in Eastern Europe (e.g. nationalist parties) has been followed by a loss in electoral support for other non-mainstream parties (e.g. new/centrist parties) further supports this notion.

Therefore, if I am correct to assume that the more extreme and radical parties are better able to mobilize the group of dissatisfied voters, higher levels of dissatisfaction should be associated with an increased probability of support for such parties but lower probability of support for more moderate non-mainstream parties. This is so because the

more dissatisfied one is, the more likely that he will eschew a moderate party for an extreme one.

The last point, of course, applies only to those cases where at least one moderate and one extreme non-mainstream party are competing for votes. There is little doubt that there are more complex electoral dynamics taking place within each country, and that not all types of non-mainstream parties compete in the period characterized by third-generation elections. For example, in the case of Czech Republic, from the non-mainstream parties, only one radical left party (the Czech and Moravian Communist Party) and one extreme nationalist party (the Republican Party) were listed on the ballots for the third-generation elections. So, from the non-mainstream bloc, only these two types of parties competed for the vote of the dissatisfied democrats. In contrast, in Slovakia, all four types of non-mainstream parties were present in this generation of elections. That said, in all but two countries (Czech Republic and Estonia),⁶ we had at least one extreme or radical party and one more moderate non-mainstream party running in the third-generation elections, likely generating the zero-sum dynamics I discussed above.

I now turn to the statistical model and the data I use for the main analysis.

3. Data and method

The countries covered in the main analysis are the ten post-communist countries that are member of the European Union (EU)—Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The main reason for selecting this group of East European countries is data availability. I rely on special

⁶ In Estonia, only new/centrist and national populist parties showed up in ballots in the third-generation elections. No radical left or extreme nationalist parties were present.

Eurobarometer surveys for Eastern Europe because they cover the largest number of post-communist countries for the longest time. The Eurobarometer surveys have been consistently conducted in the ten countries starting in the early 1990s. Since voting intention and satisfaction with democracy are the main variables of interest, I retained all those surveys that had at least these two variables. The total number of surveys analyzed is 80, covering the time period from 1992 to 2004, with a gap between 1997 and 2002 and the year 1993.⁷ The initial surveys come from the Central and Eastern Eurobarometer (CEEB) survey series that were carried out between 1990 and 1997. The remaining surveys come from the Candidate Countries Eurobarometer (CC-EB) series that were conducted in countries that were applying for European Union membership starting in 2001. Eight of the ten countries analyzed became members of the EU in 2004, with Bulgaria and Romania following in 2007, so all of them became part of the standard Eurobarometer surveys in 2005. However, the question about vote intention was not asked in the surveys after 2004. To test whether the findings hold in the period after 2004, I use six additional surveys from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) conducted between 2005 and 2011 during election times. Only a subset of elections from five countries is covered by the CSES surveys in this period: Czech Republic, 2006; Estonia, 2011; Poland, 2005 and 2007; Slovakia, 2010; and Slovenia, 2008.

The surveys analyzed provide an excellent coverage of the second and third generation elections, and allow us to test for temporal dynamics in support for non-mainstream parties. Since we have strong reasons to believe that there is causal

⁷ With the exception of 2003, when two surveys with the variables of interest were conducted, all the other 7 years (1992, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2002, 2004) had only one eligible survey per year.

heterogeneity at play (i.e. different causal stories in the second- and third-generation elections), pooling the data for the entire period is inappropriate. I therefore divide the Eurobarometer surveys in two groups, corresponding to the second and third generation of elections. The CSES surveys covering the period between 2005 and 2012 are in a separate analysis, which examines whether the third-generation dynamics become stable over time (see Table 3.2, Table 3.3 and Table 3.4). It is important to note that it is difficult to make a sharp distinction between the different generations of elections in the way the survey data is structured. Specifically, since I focus on the sustained support for non-mainstream parties and not the election outcomes, it is impossible to draw a clear ‘generational’ line of support for such parties in the years in which there are no elections but we have data on support for parties. However, given the break in the survey data between 1997 and 2002, I use surveys conducted after 2002 as roughly belonging to the third generation. Incidentally, all the third-generation elections in my sample of countries start on or after 1997, further justifying my approach.

As for the dependent variable, or rather the dependent variables, I have constructed dichotomous variables to reflect vote intention for the four different types of non-mainstream parties.⁸ For the CSES surveys, which were conducted shortly after actual elections had taken place, the respondents were asked to indicate which party, if any, they had voted for in that election. I have also constructed a separate dependent variable for those who indicated that they would not vote if elections were to be held, or, in the case of the CSES surveys, for those who did not vote in actual elections. Finally, I

⁸ It is important keep in mind that questions about vote intention asked respondents to indicate which party they would vote if elections were to be held tomorrow or at some other point. The exact wording of the questions is: If there were a General Election tomorrow, which party would you vote for, or might you be inclined to vote for?

have constructed a variable for the respondents that supported the largest mainstream opposition party at the time when the survey was conducted.

It is important to note that, in 2004, with the exception of Bulgaria and Romania, which were not part of the EU yet, the vote intention question referred to the European parliament (EP) elections.⁹ While there is literature about the second order nature of EP elections in Western Europe, it is difficult to see how East Europeans would vote differently if elections were held for national parliaments as opposed for the European Parliament at this time point. In 2004, the eight Eastern European countries that joined the EU, were newcomers to EP elections and it is reasonable to assume that there would be no second-order voting dynamics taking place.

The main independent variable is *dissatisfaction with democracy*. The actual wording of the survey questions in both the Eurobarometer and the CSES is the following: On the whole, are you, not at all satisfied, not very satisfied, fairly satisfied, or very satisfied with the way democracy works in (our country)? This variable was recoded so higher values indicate more dissatisfaction with democracy. From the individual level variables *Age* is a categorical variable with five categories or age cohorts, with higher values indicating older cohorts.¹⁰ Similarly, education is a categorical variable with four categories, where higher values indicate more education. I have recoded the *Education* variable to account for the different coding criteria used until 1997 and after 2002. The four categories are: Primary or less; Secondary uncompleted; Secondary completed;

⁹ The questions read: And which party would you be most likely to vote for at the European elections, (under 18= if you could vote at the EP elections)?

¹⁰ For the *male* variable, females are the base category. In the CSES surveys, the age variable corresponds to the actual years of age, and education is on a slightly different scale but higher values indicate more education.

Higher Education/ University/ College. Some of the coding did not correspond perfectly, but all efforts were made so higher values indicate more education. Students were excluded from the analysis.

I encountered similar problems with coding incongruities when coding the *financial outlook* variable. For the period between 1990-2002, the surveys asked a question about the financial outlook for the next year. Specifically, the questions asked: And over the next 12 months, do you expect that the financial situation of your household will...Get a lot better, Get a little better, stay the same, Get a little worse, or Get a lot worse. However, this question was not asked in the surveys after 2002. Instead, the surveys asked a more general question about the personal situation in the next five years—In the course of the next five years, do you expect your personal situation to improve, to stay about the same or to get worse? Presumably, both of these questions tap into the financial outlook that individuals have for the foreseeable future, and the answer that respondents would give would not differ systematically.¹¹ I therefore recode the *financial outlook* variable with only three categories—worse, same, and better—by collapsing the Get a lot better, Get a little better into a “better” category, and the Get a little worse, or Get a lot worse in a general “worse category.” While this is not a perfect solution to the coding incongruities inherent in the surveys, it provides a somewhat comparable measure for the future financial outlook of the respondents.

The data for the economic variables come mainly from World Bank’s World

¹¹ The CSES surveys did not have an item measuring financial outlook. Instead, I rely on an indicator of income, which categorizes the respondents on a scale from 1-5, where 1 is the lowest household income quintile and 5 is the highest quintile. The two indicators tap into the egocentric economic situation of the respondents.

Development Indicators.¹² I use indicators for GDP growth (annual %), unemployment,¹³ and inflation.¹⁴ The data on income inequality is obtained from the Standardized World Income Inequality Database (SWIID) constructed by Solt (2009). In the SWIID dataset the Gini index has a theoretical range from 0, which indicates perfect equality and 100, which indicates one single individual receives the entire income while the rest get nothing.¹⁵ For the disproportionality of the electoral system, I relied on the Gallagher index of disproportionality, which is available in Armingeon & Careja's (2004) Comparative Data Set for 28 Post-Communist Countries 1989–2004.¹⁶ Finally, to calculate the vote percentages gained by non-mainstream parties over time, I use electoral data from the European Election Database.

Since I model the effects of individual and contextual factors on voter choice, I use multilevel models with two levels of analysis. Furthermore, given the dichotomous dependent variables, I use logistic regressions. It is important to note that given the time dimension of the data, I have nested individuals in time and in countries. This nesting is particularly appropriate because, as already discussed, there are gaps in the years when

¹² For easier interpretation, all the continuous, country-level variables have been centered on their mean.

¹³ The World Bank (WB) defines unemployment as the share of the labor force that is without work but available for and seeking employment. Whenever necessary, I relied on the IMF World Economic Outlook Database to supplement the data.

¹⁴ Measured by the annual growth rate of the GDP implicit deflator. The GDP implicit deflator is the ratio of GDP in current local currency to GDP in constant local currency. See <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.DEFL.KD.ZG> for more information.

¹⁵ It is important to note that in order to increase the coverage across countries and over time, Solt (2009) uses a custom missing-data algorithm to standardize the United Nations University's World Income Inequality Database, where data collected by the Luxembourg Income Study served as the standard.

¹⁶ For more information on the construction of this variable see (Lijphart 1999: 158). Since the disproportionality of electoral outcomes is only measured at the completion of each election, I interpolated the data for years between elections.

the surveys were conducted, so a cross-classification of individuals by time and countries is not appropriate (Arzheimer, 2009). Below are the regression results.

4. Results

Before I discuss the regression results, I present time series graphs of the actual vote share of non-mainstream parties over time to get a feel of the temporal variation in support for such parties. In Figure 3.2, I have calculated the percent of the total vote that the four types of non-mainstream parties received in different five-year periods.¹⁷ Figure 3.3 is more faithful to the theoretical categorization of elections and thus presents the vote share of non-mainstream parties for the three generations of elections. Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3 are striking in two ways. First, regardless of how we break it down, there is a discernable stability in the vote share garnered by radical left, extreme nationalist, and nationalist populist parties over time. On average, such parties have not become more popular since the beginning of the transition. Second, there is a clear increase in the vote share of new/centrist populist parties over time. As we can see from Figure 3.3, there has been a remarkable rise in the support of such parties in the third-generation of elections. Such parties are leader-based, they adopt anti-establishment discourse and sidestep ideology altogether. But, most importantly for liberal democracy, such parties are moderate and have taken centrist positions on European integrations and other key issues.

Thus, the time-series data presented in Figures 3.2 and 3.3 support an important and optimistic conclusion about support for non-mainstream parties in the last two decades: voters in Eastern Europe have not been electing progressively more extreme parties. But, who votes for the different non-mainstream parties? Is dissatisfaction with

¹⁷ Yearly data are not appropriate because of the different schedule of elections in different countries.

the political system systematically related to support for any such party? To answer these questions, I now turn to multilevel regressions.

4.1 Political dissatisfaction and support for non-mainstream parties

The statistical results are reported in Tables 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4. Table 3.2 presents the results of the period from 1992 to 1997, which roughly corresponds to the second generation of elections, and Table 3.3 presents the results from the analysis that uses data only from the period between 2002 and 2004, which corresponds to the third generation of elections. Table 3.4 presents the results of the period between 2005 and 2012.

The tables suggest a number of interesting results. First, there is no consistent positive relationship between political dissatisfaction and support for any of the non-mainstream parties during the second-generation elections (Table 3.2). If anything, as models 1-5 of Table 3.2 suggest, the coefficient for the variable *dissatisfaction with democracy* is negative and statistically significant for the combined support of non-mainstream parties, suggesting that more dissatisfied respondents might have actually eschewed such parties during the second-generation elections. So, the results provide no support for the hypothesis that non-mainstream parties, as a group, benefited from the protest vote of the dissatisfied democrats during the second-generation elections. However, on average, the largest mainstream opposition parties were more likely to benefit from dissatisfied voters during the second-generation than during the third-generation elections, thus supporting Pop-Eleches's (2010) argument about this effect. As model 7 in Tables 3.2 and 3.3 show, the coefficient measuring the effect of the *dissatisfaction* variable on support for the largest mainstream opposition party is positive

and statistically significant in the second-generation period, but statistically insignificant in the third generation period.

To summarize, it is clear that, controlling for other factors, dissatisfied democrats were more likely to support the main opposition party in any given country during the second-generation elections. Once they had tried mainstream parties of all stripes, however, dissatisfied citizens turned to some non-mainstream parties but not all of them. This begs the question of which non-mainstream parties were able to tap into this dissatisfaction during the third-generation elections.

The regression results provide a rather clear answer to this question. As models 1 and 2 of Table 3.3 show, dissatisfaction with democracy is strongly associated with support for radical left and extreme nationalist parties. The substantive effect of the *dissatisfaction* variable is relatively large for the support of both of these types of parties. Specifically, controlling for all other variables, a one-unit increase in the *dissatisfaction* variable is associated with up to 9 percent increase in the probability of support for extreme nationalist parties and a 6 percent increase in the probability of support for radical left parties.¹⁸ Support for new/centrist populist and national populist parties, on the other hand, is negatively associated with higher dissatisfaction, though the substantive effect is small (see models 3 and 4 of Table 3.3). Controlling for all other effects, a one-unit increase in *dissatisfaction* corresponds to about 3 percent *lower* probability for supporting new/centrist parties and 2.5 percent *lower* probability for supporting national populist parties.

¹⁸ It is important to keep in mind that the *dissatisfaction* variable is measured on a 4-point scale.

These results suggest that not only have the more radical and extreme parties tapped into the dissatisfied pool of voters, they have done so at the expense of other non-mainstream parties. This supports one of the main arguments of this article that non-mainstream parties compete with one another for the support of the dissatisfied citizens and that extreme parties have been more successful at harnessing the electoral potential of such voters.

It is important to note that dissatisfaction with the working of democracy is most strongly associated with a withdrawal from the political process. As model 6 of Table 3.2 and 3.3 show, a one-unit increase in the *dissatisfied* variable is associated with as much as 10 percent lower probability of voting. This substantive effect is about the same in the second- and third-generation elections, suggesting that a sizable group of dissatisfied voters exit the political process.

As for the macrolevel determinants of the combined support for all non-mainstream parties, the results are inconsistent and vary wildly between the second- and third-generation of elections. However, if we focus on the third generation (Table 3.3, model 5), when non-mainstream parties received the most support, the results are in line with our theoretical predictions. In fact, all the contextual variables have the expected signs and are statistically significant. As we can see from model 5 of Table 3.3, support for non-mainstream parties is associated with higher inflation, higher income inequality, higher unemployment, and lower economic growth. This is consistent with findings from other studies. For example, scholars have shown that while economic issues did not play a major role in determining voting patterns in Slovakia in the 1990s, they did play a much

more important role in the 2000s, when the issue of national identity had lost some its traction (Deegan-Krause, 2006).

So, while Pop-Eleches (2010) finds no consistent relationship between support for non-mainstream parties and economic indicators, my analysis strongly suggests that worse macroeconomic conditions result in higher support for non-mainstream parties as a group in the third-generation elections. One plausible reason for Pop-Eleches's results is his approach of combining electoral results from both generations of elections in one statistical model, thus diluting the effect of macroeconomic variables during the third generation. Finally, as previous research has indicated, higher levels of disproportionality in electoral outcome are associated with lower support for non-mainstream parties.

One might wonder whether the voting behavior of dissatisfied citizens has changed since the mid 2000s. A crucial empirical question is whether the “revolving discontent” we observe between the second- and third-generation elections continues on or whether we see “normalization” in the voting behavior of dissatisfied citizens, such that more dissatisfied voters stick with more extreme parties (e.g. Western Europe). A preliminary answer to this question is provided by the regression results in Table 3.4.¹⁹ Using surveys from a subset of five countries and six elections that were held between 2005 and 2012, the results strongly suggest that extreme right and radical left parties continue to receive the vote of the dissatisfied voters (*Model 1*), while new/centrist populist and nationalist populist parties do not benefit from more dissatisfaction (*Model*

¹⁹ It should be noted that, although the Table 4 presents only the results for the individual levels variables, I used multilevel modeling to calculate the effects. However, since the number of second-level groups is very small (only 6), the country-level effects cannot be interpreted reliably. That said, the multilevel modeling choice is appropriate because it does not assume that all the individual respondents are independent of one another and thus it takes into account the clustered nature of the data.

2).²⁰ To be more specific, controlling for all other variables, a one-unit increase in the *Dissatisfaction* variable is associated with about 9% increased probability of vote for an extreme right or radical left party. Dissatisfaction is negatively related to voting for centrist populist and nationalist populist parties, but this effect is not statistically significant.

Consistent with findings from Table 3.2 and 3.3, the largest substantive effect of the *Dissatisfaction* variable is on the probability of not voting. Strikingly, a one-unit increase in the *Dissatisfaction* variable is associated with about 10% higher probability of abstaining from voting (*Model 3*), which is almost exactly the same substantive effect we observe using completely different surveys from different time periods (i.e. Eurobarometer surveys for 1992-2004). From the rest of the individual variables, males are more likely to vote for extreme parties than are females, but there are no discernable differences between the two sexes when it comes to voting for populist parties. This result is consistent with the results in Table 3.3. Similarly, older people are more likely to vote for all four types of non-mainstream parties than younger people. Higher levels of education are associated with an increased probability of voting for populist parties, but the effect is substantively small. Individuals coming from wealthier households are less likely to vote for extreme parties, and this effect is statistically significant. The effect of income is not statistically significant for voting for populist parties.

²⁰ For theoretical reasons and for easier presentation of results, I group the extreme parties in one group and the populist parties in a separate one.

5. Conclusion

This paper has shed light on the political behavior of dissatisfied citizens in Eastern Europe. The analysis suggests that while such citizens tended to support mainstream opposition parties in second-generation elections, in third-generation elections dissatisfied voters were a boon for non-mainstream parties. However, not all of them benefited equally. Given the competition for the dissatisfied voter among non-mainstream parties, the ones with more radical stances (i.e. the extreme nationalist and the radical left) were better positioned to attract such voters. Their ability to mobilize outraged citizens probably has a lot to do with the emotional appeal of more radical or extreme parties. Virulent nationalism and scapegoating of minorities in the case of the extreme nationalist parties, and anti-capitalist rhetoric in the case of the radical left, seem to have appealed the most to dissatisfied citizens.

If I am right that more dissatisfied voters are likely to support extreme parties, an increase in the number of those who have a more positive outlook on how democracy works should undercut the support of such extreme parties and should benefit parties with more moderate platforms, including personality based centrist parties. The opposite is true as well—an increase in the dissatisfaction with the performance of the political system should lead to more support for extreme parties. Given the great recession that began in 2007 in Europe, there has been an increase in dissatisfaction with democracy in the entire continent. We have already seen signs of extreme nationalist parties emerging in parts of Europe hit hard by the crisis (e.g. Greece). In Eastern Europe, perhaps the most striking example of such a phenomenon is the rapid rise of the ultra-nationalist

Hungarian Jobbik party, which went from 2% of the total vote in 2006 to more than 16% of the vote in the most recent 2010 parliamentary elections.

Tables and figures

Table 3.1: Overview Of Non-Mainstream Parties In Eastern Europe

<i>Country</i>	<i>Party Name</i>	<i>Party Type</i>	<i>Elections</i>
Bulgaria	Bulgarian Business Bloc (BBB)	new/centrist populist	1991-97
	National Movement Simeon II (NDSV)	new/centrist populist	2001
Czech Republic	Czech and Moravian Communist Party (KSCM)	radical left	1990-2006
Estonia	Republic Party (RSC- RPR)	extreme nationalist	1990-2002
	Committee for Defense of Soviet Power	radical left	1990
	Communist Party Free Estonia Bloc	radical left	1990
	Right Wingers' Party (VKR)	national populist	1995
	Estonian National Independent Party (ERSP)	national populist	1992
	Estonian Center Party (K)	new/centrist populist	1992-2003
	Estonian Country People's Party (EME/ER)	national populist	1999-2003
	Res Publica (RP)	new/centrist populist	2003
Hungary	Hungarian Justice and Life (MIEP)	extreme nationalist	1994–2006
	Independent Smallholders (FKGP)	national populist	1990–2002
	Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSzMP)	radical left	1990
	Workers' Party (MP)	radical left	1994-2002
	Hungarian Communist Workers' Party (MKMP)	radical left	2006
Latvia	Jobbik	extreme nationalist	2006
	Interfront	radical left	1990
	Fatherland and Freedom (TB)	national populist	1993–2006
	Latvian National Conservative Party (LNNK)	national populist	1993–95
	Pop Movement for Latvia (TKL-ZP)	extreme nationalist	1993–95
	Latvian Unity Party (LVP)	radical left	1993–98
	Popular Harmony Party (TSP)	radical left	1993–1998, 2006
	Latvian Socialist Party (LSP)	radical left	1993–95
	For Human Rights in United Latvia (PCTVL)	radical left	2002–6
	People's Party (TP)	new/centrist populist	1998
	New Party (JP)	new/centrist populist	1998
	New Era Party (JL)	new/centrist populist	2002

Lithuania	Independent Lithuanian Communist Party	radical left	1990
	Communist Party (SFSU)	radical left	1990
	Lithuanian National Union (LTS)	national populist	1992–96
	Lithuanian National Party/Young Lithuanians (LNP/JL)	extreme nationalist	1996–2000
	New Union (NS)	new/centrist populist	2000
	Lithuanian Liberal Union (LLS)	new/centrist populist	2000
	Order and Justice (IT)	national populist	2004
	Labor Party (DP)	new/centrist populist	2004
Poland	Confederation Independent Poland (KPN)	extreme nationalist	1991–93
	Christian National Union (ZChN)	national populist	1991–93
	Realpolitik Union (UPR)	extreme nationalist	1991–97
	Law and Justice (PiS)	new/centrist populist	2001
	Law and Justice (PiS)	national populist	2005
	Self Defense (SRP)	radical left	1993–2005
	Movement for Reconstruction of Poland (ROP)	national populist	1997
Romania	League of Polish Families (LRP)	national populist	2001–5
	Greater Romania Party (PRM)	extreme nationalist	1992–2004
	Romanian National Unity Party (PUNR)	national populist	1992–2000
	Socialist Labor Party (PSM)	radical left	1992–2000
	New Generation Party (PNG)	new/centrist populist	2004
Slovakia	Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HZDS)	national populist	1992–2006
	Movement for Democracy (HZD)	national populist	2002
	Slovak National Party (SNS)	extreme nationalist	1990–2006
	Right Slovak National Party (PSNS)	extreme nationalist	2002
	Association of Workers' (ZRS)	radical left	1994–98
	Slovak Communist Party (KSS)	radical left	1990–2006
	Party of Civic Understanding (SOP)	new/centrist populist	1998
	Direction—Social Democracy (SMER)	new/centrist populist	2002
Slovenia	Alliance of New Citizens (ANO)	new/centrist populist	2002
	Slovenian National Party (SNS)	extreme nationalist	1992–2004
	New Slovenia (NSI)	new/centrist populist	2000

SOURCE: Pop-Eleches (2010)

Table 3.2: Regression results from second-generation elections (1992-1997)

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	<i>Model 5</i>	<i>Model 6</i>	<i>Model 7</i>
	Radical Left	Extreme Nationalist	Centrist Populists	Nationalist Populist	Non- mainstream Parties	No Vote	Largest Mainstream Opposition Party
(Intercept)	-8.678*** (1.786)	-5.946*** (0.884)	17.417*** (4.764)	-5.754*** (1.690)	-2.963*** (0.579)	-5.132*** (1.201)	-4.505*** (0.982)
Dissatisfaction: Democracy	-0.074 (0.049)	-0.035 (0.052)	-0.005 (0.088)	-0.206*** (0.039)	-0.139*** (0.027)	0.391*** (0.032)	0.188*** (0.034)
Male	0.239*** (0.071)	0.379*** (0.074)	0.205 (0.121)	0.169** (0.056)	0.248*** (0.038)	-0.109* (0.044)	0.112* (0.047)
Age	0.271*** (0.031)	-0.126*** (0.035)	-0.070 (0.057)	0.195*** (0.025)	0.132*** (0.017)	-0.153*** (0.020)	0.037 (0.021)
Education	0.034 (0.035)	0.152*** (0.039)	0.397*** (0.076)	-0.056 (0.029)	0.055** (0.020)	-0.070** (0.023)	0.174*** (0.025)
Financial Outlook	-0.011 (0.050)	0.002 (0.051)	-0.141 (0.083)	-0.079* (0.040)	-0.061* (0.027)	0.194*** (0.031)	0.080* (0.032)
Growth	0.153*** (0.034)	0.175*** (0.041)	0.013 (0.026)	-0.280*** (0.026)	-0.092*** (0.012)	0.046** (0.017)	-0.058*** (0.015)
Unemployment	-0.054 (0.028)	-0.145*** (0.030)	-0.701*** (0.117)	0.047*** (0.013)	-0.011 (0.010)	-0.121*** (0.034)	-0.080*** (0.020)
Income inequality	-0.138* (0.066)	-0.624*** (0.078)	1.655* (0.771)	-0.442*** (0.041)	-0.314*** (0.025)	0.032 (0.056)	-0.123** (0.039)
Inflation	0.009** (0.003)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.098* (0.039)	-0.014*** (0.003)	-0.004*** (0.001)	0.007*** (0.001)	-0.009*** (0.001)
Disproportionality	-0.164 (0.104)	0.450*** (0.053)	0.884* (0.415)	0.449*** (0.047)	0.253*** (0.023)	-0.088* (0.044)	-0.587*** (0.037)
N	40						
n	29318						
Signif. codes: '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05							
Standard errors in brackets							
SOURCE: Eurobarometer							

Table 3.3: Regression results from third-generation elections (2002-2004)

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	<i>Model 5</i>	<i>Model 6</i>	<i>Model 7</i>
	Radical Left	Extreme Nationalist	Centrist Populists	Nationalist Populist	Non- mainstream Parties	No Vote	Largest Mainstream Opposition Party
(Intercept)	3.243 (5.273)	-10.324* (5.042)	-2.695 (2.369)	-12.754* (5.970)	1.956 (1.339)	-2.251* (0.885)	-2.782** (0.999)
Dissatisfaction: Democracy	0.242*** (0.033)	0.350*** (0.061)	-0.139*** (0.027)	-0.099* (0.046)	0.032 (0.020)	0.380*** (0.021)	0.025 (0.025)
Male	0.155** (0.047)	0.629*** (0.088)	-0.011 (0.039)	-0.103 (0.067)	0.092** (0.028)	-0.064* (0.031)	0.198*** (0.035)
Age	0.214*** (0.021)	-0.164*** (0.038)	0.030 (0.017)	0.117*** (0.029)	0.096*** (0.013)	0.136*** (0.014)	-0.075*** (0.016)
Education	0.126*** (0.024)	-0.049 (0.046)	0.122*** (0.020)	-0.081* (0.034)	-0.004 (0.014)	0.164*** (0.016)	0.119*** (0.018)
Financial Outlook	0.008 (0.035)	-0.169** (0.060)	0.152*** (0.029)	0.018 (0.048)	0.066** (0.021)	0.277*** (0.022)	-0.018 (0.026)
Growth	0.176 (0.112)	0.069 (0.222)	-0.557*** (0.077)	-0.407 (0.235)	-0.098* (0.038)	-0.025 (0.032)	0.070 (0.038)
Unemployment	0.274 (0.209)	-0.188 (0.204)	0.267*** (0.054)	0.253 (0.172)	0.176*** (0.038)	0.001 (0.022)	-0.109*** (0.027)
Income inequality	0.289 (0.237)	-0.670 (0.504)	1.342*** (0.186)	0.722* (0.358)	0.155* (0.078)	-0.005 (0.036)	-0.067 (0.042)
Inflation	0.307*** (0.093)	-0.026 (0.092)	0.053 (0.039)	-0.121 (0.129)	0.086** (0.026)	-0.018 (0.018)	-0.007 (0.020)
Disproportionality	0.406 (0.293)	-0.339 (0.402)	-0.567*** (0.110)	-0.076 (0.183)	-0.242** (0.075)	0.024 (0.058)	0.144* (0.068)
N	40						
n	33794						
Signif. codes: '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05							
Standard errors in brackets							
SOURCE: Eurobarometer							

Table 3.4: Regression results (2005-2011)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Extreme Right and Radical left	Centrist Populist and Nationalist Populist	No Vote
Dissatisfaction:			
Democracy	0.347***	-0.019	0.403***
	-0.085	-0.049	-0.041
Male	0.396**	0.078	-0.147*
	-0.128	-0.073	-0.061
Age	0.022***	0.019***	-0.026***
	-0.004	-0.002	-0.002
Education	-0.078	0.064**	-0.283***
	-0.048	-0.024	-0.023
Income	-0.178***	-0.007	-0.152***
	-0.051	-0.028	-0.023
Constant	-3.323	-7.766***	0.152
	-2.143	-1.592	-0.213
N	6	6	6
n	6,388	6,388	6,388
Signif. Codes: '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05			
Standard errors in brackets			
SOURCE: CSES			

Figure 3.1

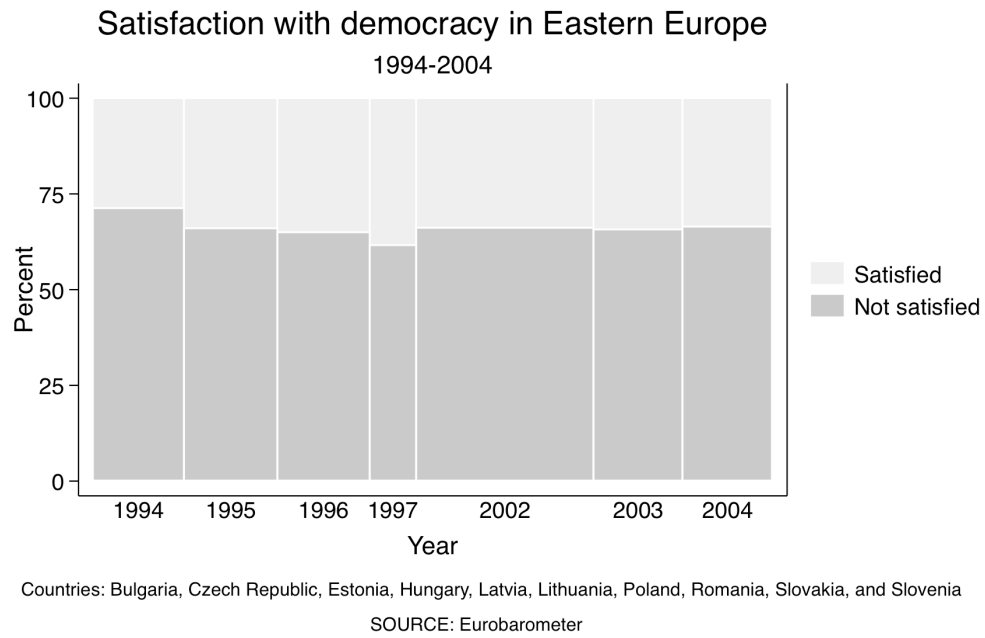
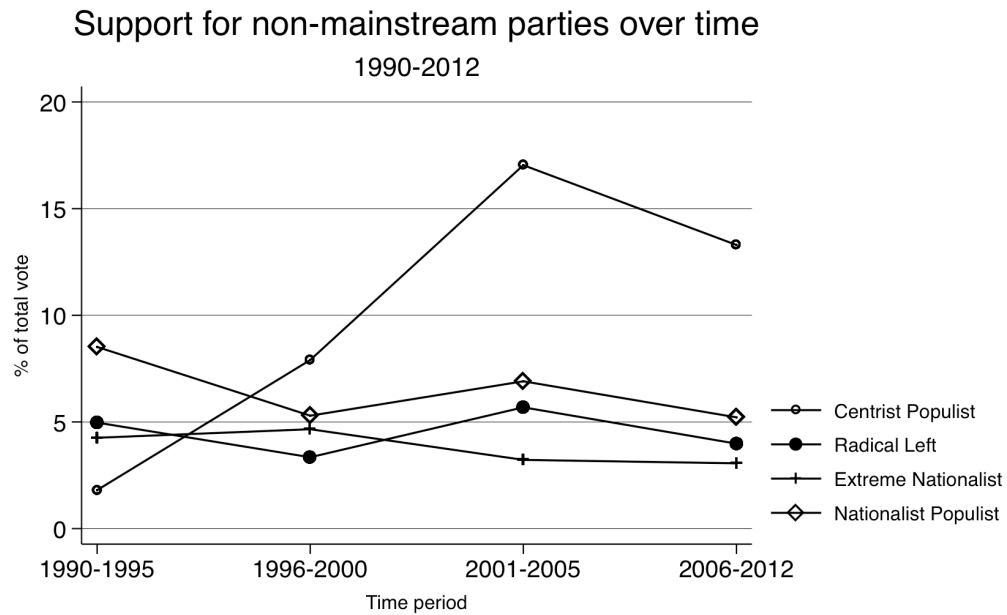


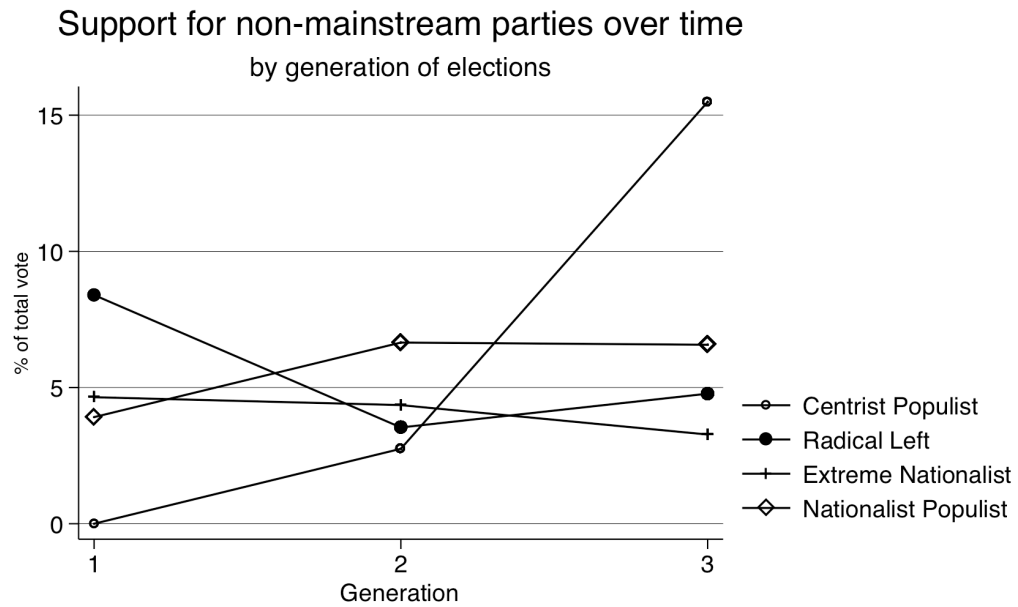
Figure 3.2



SOURCE: European Election Database

Note: data from all the 10 post-communist EU members were included in the calculation

Figure 3.3



SOURCE: European Election Database

Note: data from all the 10 post-communist EU members were included in the calculation

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